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The Great Transformation

Zbigniew Brzezinski

FOUR YEARS HAVE now passed since the implosion of the communist state in Poland set in train a process that led to the collapse of the other Central European communist states. Two years have now passed since the implosion of the Soviet system itself, following five years of agonizing "perestroika." It is, therefore, not too early to try to draw some lessons from the subsequent attempts to create, on the ruins of the communist systems, politically viable and economically successful democracies.

That on-going transformation poses intellectually challenging questions. When it began, there was no model, no guiding concept, with which to approach the task. Economic theory at least claimed some understanding of the allegedly inevitable transformation of capitalism into socialism. But there was no theoretical body of knowledge pertaining to the transformation of the statist systems into pluralistic democracies based on the free market. In addition to being daunting intellectually, the issue was and remains taxing politically, because the West, surprised by the rapid disintegration of communism, was not properly prepared for participation in the complex task of transforming the former Soviet-type systems. Consequently, it has had to improvise very hastily over the last several years.

It is in this context that I intend to address four important questions. First, what should we have learned by now regarding the processes of post-communist political and economic transformation? Second, what should we have learned regarding Western policies meant to aid and promote that transformation? Third, and in the light of the preceding two, what results can we expect to flow in the foreseeable future—over the next decade or so—from the ongoing efforts at the transformation? Fourth, and more specifically, what else should the United States now be doing in that context?

Zbigniew Brzezinski, U.S. national security adviser during 1977-1981, is the author of the recently published *Out of Control: Global Turmoil on the Eve of the 21st Century*. His previous work was titled *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (1989).

The Transformation Process

REGARDING the broad lessons of the transformation process, the first is that *expectations on both sides—in the old communist states and in the West—were much too high, and rather naive*. The liberated peoples of the former communist countries had truly exaggerated and simplistic notions of the kind of help that they would receive from the West. There was a generalized anticipation of manna from heaven, of some new "Marshall Plan" being applied on a vast scale, notwithstanding the actual historical and intellectual irrelevance to former communist

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Phases of Post-Communist Transformation

Phase One: 1-5 Years

Political Goal: Transformation
Economic Goal: Stabilization

Political	Legal/Regulatory	Economic	Western Aid
Basic democracy; Free press; End of one-party state and police system; Initial democratic coalition for change.	Elimination of arbitrary state controls.	Elimination of price controls and subsidies; End of collectivization; Haphazard privatization.	Currency stabilization; Emergency credits & aid.

Phase Two: 3-10 Years

Political Goal: From Transformation to Stabilization
Economic Goal: From Stabilization to Transformation

Political	Legal/Regulatory	Economic	Western Aid
New constitution & electoral law; Elections; Decentralized regional self-government; Stable democratic coalition = new political elite.	Legal/regulatory framework for property & business.	Banking system; Small & middle scale privatization; Demonopolization; New economic class appears.	Infrastructural credits; Technical/managerial assistance; Trade preferences & access; Initial foreign investment.

Phase Three: 5-15+ Years

Political Goal: Consolidation
Economic Goal: Sustained Take-Off

Political	Legal/Regulatory	Economic	Western Aid
Formation of stable democratic parties; Democratic political culture takes.	Independent judiciary & legal culture emerges.	Large-scale privatization; Capitalist lobbies; Entrepreneurial culture emerges.	Major foreign investment; Inclusion in key Western organs. (E.g. EC, NATO, etc.).

Duration of the phases above is influenced by the nature of the gestation *prior* to the final collapse of communism. Four basic types of positive and/or negative gestation impact on the pace of transformation: 1) both the political and the economic changes are positive; 2) political positive but economic negative; 3) political negative but economic positive and 4) both political and economic are negative. (Hungary and Poland both fall broadly in the first; Russia in the second; China in the third; Romania in the fourth.)

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countries of the Marshall Plan experience. And in the West, there was a general underestimation of the systemic complexity of the changes required, of the resistance of established and still-pervasive nomenklaturas, and of the duration of the process itself.

A striking example of the above is that the American aid programs which were initiated immediately after 1989-90 for Poland, and then for the other Central European countries, were based on the assumption that the transition process would last for about five years.[1] We now know that it will be much longer than that—ten years at a minimum for the Central European countries, probably in the range of fifteen to twenty years for the other countries—before it will be possible to say that the transformation has been completed. (One may also add, parenthetically, that the West was also rather overoptimistic as well as simplistic in its assessment of Gorbachev—of his intentions, as well as of his program—and that to some extent we currently display a similar tendency in our reactions to Yeltsin.)

A second and more complicated lesson is that *the transformation process itself is not a continuum, but a sequence of distinct phases.* Moreover, not all of the former communist states are in the same phase of the process of transformation, nor are they traversing the respective stages at the same pace. It is also noteworthy that the rapidity of the shift from phase to phase is heavily conditioned by what transpired politically and economically during the final (pre-implosion but also gestating) stage of the former communist systems.

The above requires some elaboration. The first critical phase, following immediately upon the fall of the communist system, involves a combined effort to achieve both the political transformation of the top structures of political power and the initial stabilization of the economy. The former typically means the imposition of top-down democracy; the latter typically requires stabilization of the currency while undertaking the initial unfreezing of economic controls. This initial stage is extremely difficult because it involves a fundamental change in established political and economic processes. It calls for boldness and toughness, being essentially a plunge into the unknown.

The first phase is also *the* critical one because its success is the necessary launch pad for the second stage, one in which the quest for broader political stabilization has to be combined with efforts at more pervasive economic transformation. The adoption of a new constitution, of a new electoral system, and the penetration of society by democratic processes are designed to institutionalize a functioning democracy. At the same time a broader economic transformation has to be launched, involving, for example, the establishment of a banking sector, de-monopolization, as well as small and middle-scale privatization based on legally defined property rights.

Only when and if that phase has been successfully completed can the next—and third—phase be undertaken, in which comprehensive democratic institutions and processes truly begin to take hold in an enduring fashion, while economic growth becomes sustained as a consequence of the comprehensive unleashing of private initiative. A democratic political culture and an entrepreneurial tradition gradually become reality. This third phase can be described as involving political consolidation and sustained economic take-off. To make all this more concrete, one might hazard the judgment that Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary are now on the brink of entering that third phase. (See the attached chart on p.4 for a schematic representation of the phases).

It is also important to note that the ability to embark on, and to traverse, particularly the first critical phase—the most important

[1]See, for example, the U.S. General Accounting Office Report, "Poland and Hungary—Economic Transition and U.S. Assistance," May, 1992, pp.18-26, 30.

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stage of decision—is heavily conditioned by the degree to which a particular fallen communist regime permitted both political relaxation and economic liberalization in its last years. The important fact to note is that, in effect, the final agony of communism also served simultaneously—at least, in several cases—as a period of political and economic gestation for the emergence of post-communism. The consequences of that gestation in the cases of Hungary (the Kadar regime in the 1970s and 1980s) and of Poland (the Gierek regime of the 1970s and the last 5 years of Jaruzelski in the second half of the 1980s) are self-evident.

The third lesson to be deduced from what we have seen of the transformation process involves *the primacy of political reform as the basis for effective economic reform. A democratic political consensus and effective political processes are* ***essential*** *for the successful initiation and consummation of the first critical stage of change*. One could theoretically postulate the need for an authoritarian system of discipline at this stage, because a great deal of social sacrifice is required—and generated—during its implementation. China obviously comes to mind here. However, in the wake of the collapse of the communist regimes in Central Europe and in the Soviet Union, an authoritarian approach does not seem feasible or desirable.

On the contrary, democratic consensus is imperative. But it must be organized and institutionalized. Initially, that typically calls for the presence of an effective, indeed of a charismatic popular leader—a Havel, Walesa, or perhaps Yeltsin—who can command popular support. It also requires the presence or rapid organization of a political movement that supports the leader in an institutionalized fashion, and is capable of sustaining popular support in the face of the social dislocations and deprivations that typically occur in this phase. But, above all, the initial phase, with its often euphoric post-communist enthusiasm, must be exploited promptly to build the foundations for legitimate and formal democratic procedures within which longer-term economic reforms are pursued. By the time the second phase is reached, public euphoria tends to have waned while disappointment with the transformation tends to escalate; thus much depends on the resilience and viability of the new democratic processes. Much of Russia's difficulties stem from Gorbachev's and then Yeltsin's failure to focus on the need for comprehensive political reform as an urgent priority.

The foregoing leads to a fourth lesson, which flows from the previous three: *the rapid and comprehensive transformation—the shock therapy of the so-called "big bang" approach—is only possible if both the necessary subjective and objective conditions exist.* The Polish case is a good example of the combination of the two. It involved the existence of a nation-wide counter-political elite, namely the Solidarity movement, which permeated society, was not crushed during the decade of the martial law, and could promptly serve as an effective counter-political elite on the national scale (rather than, as in some other cases, being confined to a few dissidents suddenly installed at the top of the national power hierarchy). That elite, moreover, was buttressed by the presence of a moral authority able to nourish the social will to sacrifice, namely the Catholic Church. In addition, a charismatic leader, who enjoyed special authority within the class likely to suffer the most from the social sacrifices, was able to personalize the political change. A free peasant class and a large underground economy provided economic responsiveness to the workings of the law of supply and demand, upon the lifting of price controls and the termination of subsidies. Finally, Poland benefitted from the support given to its surfacing entrepreneurial culture by an engaged diaspora comprised of some ten million Poles who live abroad.

The listing of these factors suggests that while the Polish "Big Bang" approach may be exemplary, it may also be, in many

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respects, exceptional. In the absence of some combination of political cohesion, commitment, and consensus with economic receptivity and responsiveness, the shock therapy is likely to produce political conflict and economic chaos, with well-positioned monopolies taking advantage of price liberalization simply to increase prices, thereby also stimulating inflation.

The fifth and last general lesson regarding post-communist reconstruction follows from this last point: *One should not rule out transformation strategies that involve slower motion through the needed several stages, and that are also reliant on continued governmental guidance rather than purely on the unleashing of independent and dynamic market forces.* Here the warnings of the very prominent Japanese development economist, the late Suburo Okita, come to mind. He argued cogently in several papers that governmental intervention is needed in countries in which the free market mechanisms lack tradition, experience, and appropriate social culture. He stressed that there are societies in which some combination of market mechanism and governmental planning is necessary for historical reasons, especially as the market mechanism is not always and of itself infallible.

The examples of both Japan and Korea are very pertinent to the case made by Okita. In the summer of 1993, the World Bank was completing an exhaustive analysis of what transpired in the Far East in the last three decades and what lessons may be derived from that experience. According to a preview in the *Financial Times*, one of the Bank's conclusions regarding the Korean experience was that "...from the early 1960s, the government carefully planned and orchestrated the country's development...[It] used the financial sector to steer credits to preferred sectors and promoted individual firms to achieve national objectives...[It] socialized risk, created large conglomerates, created state enterprises when necessary, and moulded a public-private partnership that rivalled Japan's."[2] Much the same could be said about Singapore as an example of successful directed growth. At the very least, such Asian experience should not be disregarded when contemplating the current political, economic and social dilemmas facing both Russia and Ukraine, countries without strong free market traditions and developed entrepreneurial cultures.[3]

The Western Response

LET US NOW turn to the second of the four major questions posed at the outset: the lessons to be learned concerning Western policy designed to aid and promote post-communist transformation.

First, Western aid is most critical during the first stage of transformation. In fact, significant Western aid is probably essential if that stage is to be traversed successfully. Later, after the first phase, Western aid ceases to be central, whereas access to Western markets and foreign investment become increasingly important. That access becomes the primary source of continued internal change and of export-driven economic dynamism. That is largely the case today in the relationship between post-communist Central Europe and the European Community, with the result that the issue of "access" has become much more controversial than the scale of "aid." In contrast, the former Soviet Union is

[2]See Michael Prowse, "Miracles Beyond the Free Market," *Financial Times*, April 26, 1993.

[3]A useful compendium of Saburo Okita's writings on this subject is contained in "Steps to the 21st Century," *The Japan Times*, 1993. In addition to Saburo Okita's numerous writings, see also D.W. Nam (a former prime minister), "Korea's Economic Take-off in Retrospect," a paper presented at the Second Washington Conference of the Korean-American Association, Washington, D.C., Sept. 28-29, 1992; and N. Yonemura and H. Tsukamoto (both of MITI), "Japan's Postwar Experience: Its Meaning and Implications for the Economic Transformation of the former Soviet Republics," March 1992.

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still in the first phase of the transformation process, when direct Western aid for stabilization and initial political transformation is essential.

Second, and perhaps more controversially, after the critical first phase, the inflow of external capital is not decisive. If Western capital was the key to success, the former East Germany should be flourishing, Hungary should have taken off economically some time ago, followed by the Czech Republic, with Poland trailing behind. Moreover, Russia should be doing much better than China.

The former East Germany (GDR) has received monumental amounts of external capital over the last three years, at a rate of $100 billion per annum, for a population of a mere 16 million people. (Just calculate what anything comparable to such a per capita inflow would be required for Central Europe as a whole, or for Russia specifically!) But the crucial point is that the former GDR is still in a massive socio-economic crisis. Similarly, Hungary and Czechoslovakia (prior to its division into two states in early 1993) have been the beneficiaries of much larger capital inflows than Poland. Yet today, Poland has a larger private sector and is the first former communist country to have attained a positive economic growth rate.

China has been the beneficiary of relatively small amounts in terms of grants, loans, credits, and until recently, investments. Over the first twelve years after the start of the reforms in 1979, the total involved for China—a huge country with an enormous population—was less than $60 billion. This is much less than the Soviet Union/Russia has received since 1986—some $86 billion. Yet China has done extremely well in terms of its economic development, growing over the last decade at a rate of 6 percent per annum, last year at 9 percent, this year probably at 13 percent. Russia, in contrast, is still in an economic mess, with a negative growth rate.

In brief, after the conclusion of the first critical phase during which external assistance is central, the nature of domestic policies, social discipline and motivation cumulatively become more important than the inflow of external capital in determining success or failure in the pursuit of economic transformation.

A third lesson with respect to the inflow of external capital is that explicit preconditions and strict supervision of its utilization are imperative. In fact, if a choice is to be made between quite limited but tightly monitored financial assistance and large inflows of external and largely untargeted capital, the former is clearly more beneficial and, therefore, should be favored. This is especially true in the first phase, until trade and foreign investment replace the initial dependence on direct aid. Trade and investment almost automatically tend to be subject to more effective control by the directly interested and personally concerned parties. In the absence of close external supervision, as experience sadly shows, massive diversion and extensive theft of foreign aid is to be expected.

The West should have learned this from its experience with Poland under Gierek. In the 1970s, Poland borrowed about $30 billion, yet it is very difficult to account for what happened to these funds. Today, there are even more serious questions to be raised regarding the $86 billion that has flowed into the former Soviet Union since the second half of the 1980s. Some estimates made in the United States conclude that as much as $17 billion of it has been diverted away from intended purposes and recycled to Western banks. While recently in Moscow, I cited that estimate to Arkady Volskiy, the head of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. With a laugh he dismissed the estimate as absolutely wrong, insisting that the total diverted is at least $23 billion.

A recently concluded Japanese study, conducted on the eve of the July G-7 Summit in Tokyo by a private think tank, the Toray Corporate Business Research Inc., also addressed this issue. The study conclud-

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ed that the Russian government has lost control over the capital flight phenomenon, with the consequence that large amounts of cash, gold, and diamonds have been stashed in Swiss and Hong Kong banks. "The scale of the capital flight has already exceeded 40 billion dollars," the study asserted.[4] Though this estimate may be too high, it is nonetheless clear that the problem of illicit diversion is a very serious one.

Accordingly, precise targeting and close monitoring by donors should be explicitly asserted, even if it offends the national pride of the recipients. Specific conditionality is also essential regarding the fundamentals of reform. Stabilization in the monetary area, depoliticization of the banking system, demonopolization, at least initial small-scale privatization, including in agriculture, and the decentralization of economic decision-making, are the minima that the West has the right to insist upon when granting aid, if the aid is to be helpful.

Fourth, the West ought to encourage the recipient countries to develop some longer-range mobilizing vision, one capable of sustaining domestic support for the needed painful reforms. Even with generous external aid, domestic sacrifices and a great deal of social pain are unavoidable. Therefore, the articulation of a more positive, hopeful, constructive perspective on the future is politically necessary. The public must perceive a sense of direction which justifies their transitional pain and sacrifice.

For the Central Europeans such a vision largely exists already. It involves the notion of united Europe, and of their eventual membership in it. That vision is very meaningful and tangible for an average Czech or a Hungarian or a Pole. It represents something to which they can relate personally. The issue becomes more difficult and elusive when one moves further east. What can provide such a constructive vision today for a Ukrainian who has experienced independence for two years and has found that it has brought mainly socio-economic deprivation? What is that vision for a Russian, who not only experiences similar socio-economic deprivation but also feels acutely humiliated by Russia's loss of the big power status? It is not easy in these circumstances to generate a positive vision of the future.

For the Ukrainians, perhaps it could be the notion of Ukraine eventually becoming, and being accepted by its Western neighbors as a Central European state, and thus part of a community that is already moving closer to the West. That vision certainly would be more tangible to the western Ukrainians than to the eastern Ukrainians, but it might have wider appeal to the Ukrainians who wish to define their nationhood in terms that differentiate Ukraine from Russia.

For the Russians, perhaps, the appropriate vision might be one of becoming a partner of the United States, given the fascination with America that is today so widespread in Russia. But if Russia is to be "a partner" of the United States, America will have to be explicit in insisting that such a Russia be truly a post-imperial Russia, because only such a Russia can become genuinely democratic. The fact is that Russia has still a considerable distance to go in the painful process of adjusting to its new post-imperial reality, a process that was consummated in the case of Britain with the loss of India, in the case of France with the loss of Algeria, in the case of Turkey under Attaturk who defined the concept of a new, would-be modern, would-be European, Turkey. The process of post-imperial self-redefinition is a complicated and difficult one. One can understand why opposition and confusion surround this subject in

[4]As reported by KYODO, May 24, 1993. Further shocking details regarding the diversion of Western aid for illicit purposes are contained in Grigory Yavlinsky's op-ed article "Western Aid is No Help" in the July 28, 1993 *New York Times*.

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today's tormented Russia; but the issue must be addressed.

A Differentiated Future

IN THE LIGHT of the responses to the first two questions, what reasonable expectations regarding the post-communist transformation might be entertained in terms of the foreseeable future—say, the next decade or so? It follows from the analysis already offered that the transformation will be differentiated—in kind and time—as well as difficult. But what is likely to be the overall pattern? Are all of the former communist states safely on the way to becoming pluralistic, free market democracies?

Before I hazard some rather arbitrary, personal judgments in response to this question, let me suggest a fourfold predictive framework:

The first category includes countries with essentially positive futures, by which is meant countries in which it would take something altogether unforeseeable and, at the present time, rather improbable for them to be diverted from the process of becoming viable pluralistic democracies.

The second category includes countries whose prospects over the next ten years look somewhat better than even, but in which a reversal, indeed a political and/or economic failure, still cannot be excluded.

The third category involves countries whose political and economic futures, in my judgment, are likely to be still unresolved beyond this decade and into the next century.

Finally a fourth category, essentially an extension of the third, comprises countries whose futures currently, and into the foreseeable future, look distinctly unpromising.

In this classification, as already indicated, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary fall into the first category, as do probably also Slovenia and Estonia. Of these, the first three are likely to be members of the European Community and of NATO within a decade, and even perhaps within this century. Without minimizing their internal difficulties, their futures appear largely predetermined, although Hungary or Estonia could be affected adversely by some external complications (notably, ethnic problems). In any case, the first three can be seen as about to enter, or as entering, Phase 3 on the table on p.4, while the latter two are in Phase 2.

Even the likely success of the leading three, however, should not obscure the fact that it will take many years before the gap is significantly narrowed between the standards of living of the richer West and even its most promising post-communist neighbors. If one assumes, for example, that Germany and Austria will grow at 2 percent per annum, while Poland, Hungary, and the former Czechoslovakia will grow twice as fast, at 4 percent p/a, it would still take 30 years in the case of Czechoslovakia, 46 years of Hungary, and 63 years of Poland for the gap in the respective GNP per capita to be closed.[5] Even if the rates of growth were 2 percent and 8 percent respectively, the years required would still be 12, 17, and 23 for the respective Central European populations. Obviously the prospects are much dimmer still for the countries listed below in the second, third, and fourth categories.

The second category—countries whose futures are generally positive but which are politically and economically still vulnerable—includes Slovakia, Croatia (if it does not get entangled in a new war with Serbia), Bulgaria, perhaps Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Kirgizikstan, and Turkmenistan (the latter two because of indigenous economic potential). Some of them—e.g. Latvia or Bulgaria—may be nearing Phase 2 but the others are still navigating through Phase 1.

[5]Based on the CIA World Fact Book 1991, with the per capita GNP for Germany being $14,600; for Austria $14,500; for CSFR $7,700; for Hungary $5,800; for Poland $4,200.

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The countries which fall into the third category—those whose political and economic futures are likely to be still unresolved for a decade or more—are, first and foremost Russia—and then Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. Finally, those in the fourth category, whose futures for a variety of reasons look rather grim, are: Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia, Moldova, and Tajikistan. None of the above can be said to be very advanced (or successful) in traversing Phase 1; some may not even have entered it; and most of them are, in fact, still governed by their former communist elites who masquerade under new labels, but whose commitment to a pluralist democracy and sensitivity to its nuances is still questionable.

Of those in the uncertain (third) category, Russia is, of course, the most important. One has to recognize some positive trends in ongoing Russian developments. The process of drafting the constitution has been moving forward, albeit with many difficulties. One can expect at least an initial formula regarding a new constitutional order to emerge from this exercise, and that in itself will be a step forward in the institutionalization of a democratic system. There has certainly been general democratization, particularly of the upper-metropolitan levels of Russian society. In a number of the large cities, democracy is an operational reality, though it lacks genuinely pervasive institutionalization. There has also been some privatization of the economy, and initial steps toward its stabilization. Also, at the top political levels, both President Boris Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev have been willing to denounce—at least rhetorically—traditional imperial aspirations, thereby breaking with a past that would otherwise certainly inhibit genuine democratization.

But there are also contradictory trends: economic chaos is a reality; there is no effective monetary policy, inflation is still extraordinarily high, unemployment is rising; the writ of the government is effectively limited to a few metropolitan centers and does not run throughout the country; there is a lack of policy cohesion and consistency; the much hallowed privatization accounts for only about 50,000 of Russia's approximately 300,000 small shops, with most of those privatized located in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Nizhny Novgorod;[6] there is massive diversion of Western funds and aid by the remnants of well-positioned nomenklatura and by the new class of middlemen; and many, probably most, of the new capitalists represent parasitic wealth, channeled mainly into consumption and not into productive investment.

Also complicating the economic picture is the evident renewal of imperial aspirations, which increases the likelihood of intensifying tensions with Ukraine and also generates problems with some of the other neighboring states. Most noteworthy here is the use of economic leverage and of military pressure to preserve informally the essential elements of the Kremlin's former imperial status. Quite symptomatic of Moscow's continued reluctance to accept Kiev's independence as an enduring fact was the contemptuous dismissal of it (in the words spoken to me in 1993 by a senior Russian policymaker) as "that conditional entity called Ukraine."

All of this justifies—and generates—some uncertainties regarding the future. One can expect, most probably, continued democratization, but in a context of inconsistent reforms that run the risk of producing periodic phases of intensifying anarchy—and thus the temptation to resort eventually to more authoritarian solutions. As a result, Russia does not fit either category one or category two, but has to be placed—reluctantly and regrettably—in category three. The same is true of Ukraine, whose independence is still in jeopardy and whose internal

[6]See also "Measuring Russia's Emerging Private Sector," Intelligence Research Paper, CIA, Washington, DC, November, 1992.

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transformation has been lagging even more badly.

The foregoing cumulatively suggests that history is still open-ended as far as the final outcome of the post-communist transformation is concerned. *As of now, politically and economically successful liberal democracy is not a foreordained outcome, except perhaps for five out of the twenty-seven post-communist states.*

What Else Should the West Do?

IT IS TIME to turn to the last of the four questions posed at the onset; namely, what should be the posture of the West, and of the United States in particular?

The first need is still for a long-term and comprehensive strategy that integrates geopolitical and economic objectives. As yet, it simply does not exist. The needed strategy should be neither Russo-centric nor Russo-phobic. It must deal with the post-communist area as a whole, but recognize the significantly different stages of change within it. To develop and sustain such a comprehensive policy, the United States should press for the creation of a standing G-7 strategic planning board, one capable of monitoring changes and of advocating the needed division of labor among the principal Western powers, perhaps on a geographical basis. For example, Japan with its hesitations about aiding Russia, could be encouraged to be helpful by concentrating on some other formerly Soviet regions, such as Ukraine. Such a standing strategic board should also interact with pertinent representatives of the affected countries.

In addition, a more comprehensive strategy might involve, for example, Western credits for Central European exports of food and consumer goods to Russia. This would facilitate the Central European transformation while increasing the likelihood that aid for the Russian people will reach the designated recipients rather than being diverted into the black market by middlemen—as sadly has often been the case. In any case, some restoration of trade between Central Europe and the former Soviet Union is clearly in the interest of all of the parties concerned.

Second, the G-7 should now develop an aid package for Ukraine, paralleling the one adopted for Russia. Geopolitical pluralism in the space of the former Soviet Union should be viewed by the West as an objective of co-equal importance with systemic transformation. This point deserves repetition: geopolitical pluralism is as important as systemic transformation. The United States is beginning in a hesitant fashion to move in that direction, but its policy in this respect has been slow, marred by historical ignorance, beset by bureaucratic stalemates, and instinctively Russo-centric. An aid package for Ukraine, conditioned quite explicitly and specifically on a Ukrainian reform program, is justified on humanitarian and economic, as well as geopolitical, grounds.

Early in 1992, the head of the IMF, Michel Camdessus, publicly stated that Russia would need about $24 billion in external assistance, and that the other former Soviet republics would need an additional $20 billion.[7] A little over a year later, that total sum has been allocated for Russia but little or nothing has been designated for Ukraine and the other non-Russian republics. Yet chaos around Russia will either undermine Russia's own reforms or stimulate a revival of Russia's imperial ambitions, or both—with all of these outcomes being very detrimental to the cause of postcommunist transformation.

Third, facilitating access to Western markets and increased investment should now be the major focus of G-7 initiatives, especially as the EC has been slow in this regard. Some concessions were made by the EC at its June 1993 Copenhagen meeting, but they involved only a partial liberalization of the existing quota-based system limiting Central European

[7] *New York Times*, April 16, 1992.

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access to Western markets. West European economic lobbies—for example, the European Chemical Industry Council or the European Largest Textile and Apparel Companies—as well as some key national ones—for example, the German Steel Association—have teamed up with European agricultural interests in agitating for continued discrimination against competitive Central European products.

The United States should press its allies on this score, because it has been somewhat more open than the EC, but it should also further liberalize its own policies, which have also been unduly restrictive toward Central European and Russian exports. The economies of Central Europe and Russia badly need trade-driven stimuli.

Fourth, the United States should de-emphasize some of the dogmatic elements in the advice that it offers to the former communist states. There has been a tendency in the West, and particularly in the United States, to make shibboleths of the free market and of the elimination of the role of the government in guiding economic development. Indeed, even advice on democracy should be offered with the historically humbling appreciation of the prolonged stages that were required to nurture and consolidate democracy in the West. Cultural conditioning and specific circumstances should be taken into account to a far greater degree than they have been in the rather dogmatic advice that has often been proffered.

Finally, it is not too early to start deliberations about the needed new security arrangements, designed progressively to encompass the former communist states. Geopolitical insecurity is rising in the former communist world and it is becoming as severe a political problem as socio-economic anxiety. There needs to be a response to it, developed and applied in stages, pointing toward the progressive acceptance into NATO of former communist states. Inclusion by stages of some of the former communist states will be more acceptable to Russia and to Ukraine if it is presented as part of a process, the end result of which should be the emergence of a broad Euro-Atlantic system of security that someday might also include Moscow and Kiev. In any case, as a practical matter, some former communist states should be able to enter NATO sooner than others, since it makes no sense to wait until all are ready to enter before letting the first one in. Accordingly, the admission of one (probably Poland) or more Central European states into NATO, roughly by 1996, should be a major goal of Western policy.

All of this represents a manageable agenda, provided the West has the needed political will and strategic direction. But will America address these issues? Will the West respond? Probably not quite as deliberately and as strategically as one might wish. The West is currently in a phase of internal preoccupation, with cultural hedonism dominating its value system. Cultural hedonism does not lend itself to an activist policy which entails commitment and also requires some measure of sacrifice. While it may be unfair to accuse the United States of embracing isolationism—for America is certainly not disengaging from its formal global obligations—it does appear that Washington is currently pursuing an essentially minimalist foreign policy. Though not deliberately isolating itself from the rest of the world, the United States at this stage seems inclined to define its obligations in the most narrow fashion, exercising its leadership responsibilities only in exceptional circumstances, when the necessity for action becomes overriding.

Hopefully, Western hedonism in general and American minimalism represent but a passing phase of what might be called "post-victory blues"—the inevitable let down after the sustained historical effort of the Cold War. One must hope so because if this phase does not end soon, the post-communist transformation will not only be much more painful and prolonged, but its outcome will be even more uncertain. □

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America and Bosnia

Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson

THE WAR IN Bosnia has occasioned the first significant debate over foreign policy of the post cold war period. It has thereby done what the war against Iraq did not do. The short-lived debate that attended armed intervention in the Persian Gulf resembled in most respects the debate attending armed intervention in the last decade or so of the Cold War. All that was missing was the Cold War itself, and thus the risk of armed conflict with the Soviet Union. In Congress, an interventionist Republican party was pitted against a non-interventionist Democratic party. In the broader public debate, those urging war against Iraq were those who had supported armed intervention on earlier occasions, while those who opposed going to war were those who had opposed resorting to force on these same occasions.

In the case of Bosnia, the identity of the participants has changed. In Congress the debate over whether to pursue an interventionist course has not followed party lines. The Democrats can no longer be identified with an anti-interventionist position. The same is true of a number of public figures who had once been reliably anti-interventionist. Indeed, some of the most insistent criticism of both the Bush and Clinton administrations for failing to give military support to the Bosnian Muslims has come from those whose anti-interventionist disposition had long been taken for granted. Thus what Senator Joseph Biden has come to symbolize for the liberal democrats in Congress, Anthony Lewis has come to symbolize for liberal expression in the media.

The debate over America's course in the Balkans has also aroused the emotions and passions of participants in a way the earlier debate over war in the Gulf did not. There is an intensity of feeling over Bosnia that was not apparent over Kuwait. It may be seen in the heightened rhetoric that has become almost commonplace among critics of the American government's "failure" to date to come to the aid of Bosnia's beleaguered Muslims. For this failure, Leslie Gelb has written, "Bosnian Muslims will pay with their lives, and Americans with their faith." The loss of our soul, it is argued, will be matched by the sacrifice of the nation's vital interests. Albert Wohlstetter has found in our recent record in the Balkans "the worst performance of the democracies since World War II—and the most dangerous." One must go back to the debate over Vietnam to find statements of comparable intensity.

Although the war in Bosnia has aroused such strong emotions and passions, it has not evoked comparable appeals for the sacrifice of blood and treasure. With very few exceptions, those who have called for American interven-

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tion have been careful to emphasize the quite modest costs they are willing to pay in intervening. While insistent that the interests at stake in Bosnia are very great, they are equally insistent that these interests be secured at modest cost.

The debate over Bosnia has thus been marked by a disjunction between interests avowed and costs rejected. It has also been marked by a view of the war's origins that must yield a distorted picture of the interests that are at stake. The conflict is not, as it has been so often depicted, a conventional case of aggression by one state (Serbia) against another (Bosnia). The insistence upon seeing its origins in these terms must distort its true nature, obscure the objectives of an intervention, and lead to a view of the interests at stake in the war that is misleading and unpersuasive. It is not the repelling of aggression as such, nor the maintenance of that ill-defined abstraction known as "world order," that constitute the interests at stake in Bosnia. Neither is it the need to appease a Muslim world that, in the absence of western intervention in Bosnia, stands ready to succor Bosnia's Muslims. The great interest at stake in Bosnia is neither more nor less than order and stability in post-Cold War Europe. If a persuasive case cannot be made on these grounds, it probably cannot be made at all.

Origins and Interpretations

DESPITE THE complex and tangled history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the origins of the war in that republic of Yugoslavia proceeded from causes that were not inordinately complex. The true cause of the war was the structure of reciprocal fears that existed within Bosnia on the eve of the conflict. Each group feared domination by others, and not unreasonably so. For the Muslims, the prior secession of Croatia and Slovenia had left them, in effect, as members of a Greater Serbia, and they not unnaturally feared that their interests would suffer badly in a rump Yugoslavia dominated by the Serbs. In such an eventuality, the repressive acts that the Serbs had committed in Kosovo might be duplicated in Bosnia; and independence appeared as the only escape from this fearful prospect. The Serbs reasoned in essentially the same way. As part of Yugoslavia, their interests would be secure; as a minority in a unitary Bosnian state dominated by the Muslims, they foresaw a repetition, at best, of the discrimination they had suffered in Kosovo when its status was elevated in the 1974 Yugoslav constitution—and, at worst, of the horrors they had suffered during World War II when Bosnia formed part of the Nazi supported Croatian Ustasha state.

The Croatians, for their part, wanted out of Yugoslavia for the same reason that the Muslims did, and wanted out of Bosnia for reasons not dissimilar to those of the Serbs. Their vote for independence in the March 1992 referendum, as Aleksa Djilas has observed, did not betoken support for a unitary Bosnian state; on the contrary, their exit from Yugoslavia was the means by which they might gain entry into newly independent Croatia.[1] Their attitude was an ominous portent, because it meant that a majority of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the best armed part at that, was opposed to the creation of this new state. The Serbs and Croats in Bosnia had the support of the two nationalities that had traditionally contended for dominance in Yugoslavia. From the beginning, it was evident that the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina could only be secured if it could muster large-scale support from the international community.

There is nothing mysterious about the calculations of the three national groups. Each group nursed historic grievances, some more recent than others, but all of which were felt with passionate intensity. The utter incompatibility of their respective interests was such that war was far and away the most likely outcome of Bosnia's secession from

[1]Aleksa Djilas, "The Nation That Wasn't." *The New Republic*, September 21, 1992, p. 25.

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Yugoslavia. Indeed, one needs hardly to invoke the notorious tribal hatreds and violent propensities of the Balkan peoples to account for the war, for secession has nearly always in history been attended with armed violence. It was so on the two occasions when it was attempted in our own experience as a nation (in 1776 and 1860). Daniel Webster's famous assertion in 1850—"Peaceful secession, Sir! Your eyes and mine are destined never to see that miracle"—stated a fact applicable not only to the American Union but to the normal experience of all states, which hardly allowed any other conclusion but that secession was and would ever be an act of war. The experience of the Soviet Union should not mislead us on this score, for the peaceful breakup of a state is far more the exception than the rule—a miracle, at odds with the normal course of events.

The origins of the Bosnian war are thus relatively simple. What is exceedingly complex is how the descent into savage fighting might have been averted; still more difficult is how the war, once started, might have been—and might yet be—stopped. That the policy which was adopted, in all its twists and turns, has been an utter failure is a point that need hardly be labored. The role played by the Western powers in attempting to put an end to the war has many critics but few defenders. The judgment that historians will reach about the diplomatic record of the past two years will doubtless be tempered by the sheer intractability of the problems that were faced, but that it will be a harsh one seems altogether likely.

In assessing the role played by the United States in attempting to put an end to the war, attention must first be drawn to the way in which the American government interpreted the origins of the conflict, for this interpretation dictated in critical respects its diplomatic posture. The American government's explanation stressed that the war was caused above all by Serbian aggression. The indictment rested fundamentally not on the violations of the laws of war that the Serbs have undoubtedly committed on a lavish scale, but on the decision to use force in the first place. In the U.S. view, the war itself was a crime. Although the Serbs' violations of *jus in bello* have been seen to confirm and compound their violation of *jus ad bellum*, the presumed existence of the aggression itself has played a decisive role in shaping the policy of the U.S. government. The assumption, moreover, that the war has been one of Serbian aggression has been generally accepted in the United States; the debate over intervention has not fundamentally turned over the existence of aggression against an internationally recognized state, but over the potential costs of U.S. military action to reverse it.

The validity of this widespread consensus rests primarily on the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina gained recognition as an independent state in early April 1992, and that all subsequent support which Belgrade provided to the Bosnian Serbs constituted an illegal intervention in Bosnia's internal affairs. Yet the manner in which independence was achieved and the manner in which recognition was accorded were themselves highly questionable. In holding a referendum on March 1, 1992, in which a majority voted to secede from Yugoslavia, Bosnia satisfied part of the criteria laid down by the European Community and the United States for achieving recognition (with the West also exacting from the Sarajevo government a declared respect for minority rights), but the referendum, boycotted by the Serbs, was itself a violation of the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution. That constitution, like its predecessors, had conferred a right of secession but made it dependent on the mutual agreement of the nations composing Yugoslavia. It was based, that is to say, on the notion of a concurrent majority of the constituent nations, not on simple majoritarianism; to move to secession without the consent of the Serbs was a plain violation of its terms.[2]

[2]See Misha Glenny, "What Is To Be Done?" *The New York Review of Books*, May 27, 1993, pp. 14-15.

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If the act of secession was illegal within the terms of the Yugoslav constitution, was it nevertheless legal from the standpoint of international law? Is it now, in other words, an accepted principle of international law that a majority of the population within a well defined province or constituent republic, if it so wishes, has a right to secede from an existing state? There is little to conclude that there is. No charter, treaty, or convention confers such a right, and for the reason that a great many states (and nearly all those of a multi-ethnic or -religious kind) would be incapable of maintaining themselves if such a right existed. References to the right of self-determination in documents such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights have not been understood as conferring a right of secession. Were the case otherwise, we would have the inexplicable phenomenon that a large number of states had entered a suicide pact when they signed the covenant, and no known rule of legal interpretation would allow such an absurd construction.[3]

These considerations establish that the recognition of Bosnia's independence itself constituted an illegal intervention in Yugoslavia's internal affairs, to which Belgrade had every right to object. The contrary view may only be asserted on the debased view that international law is whatever the United States and the Security Council says it is and that we are free, like an Alice in the grip of deconstructionism, to have words mean anything we like. These considerations do not establish that Bosnia's Muslims had no justification for their secession, but rather that the justification, if it existed, must be based on grounds other than those of law (whether municipal or international). Appeal must be made, in other words, to the natural right of revolution. But as Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence, this right is not an unqualified one: only a "long train of abuses & usurpations" can justify a decision to throw off established government.

Ironically, it has been the advocates of large-scale intervention, and indeed the Izetbegovic government itself, that have provided the most persuasive evidence that Jefferson's threshold was not met in the Bosnian case. For the picture that advocates of intervention have drawn of the almost idyllic relations that prevailed among Serbs, Croats, and Muslims before the war severely undercuts the view that the Muslims had suf-

[3]That a general right to self-determination (understood as conferring a right of secession to a majority within a well defined administrative unit) would be a formula for massive instability seems evident. The words of Robert Lansing, Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state, remain perhaps the most penetrating commentary on the consequences to which this presumed right would lead. "Fixity of national boundaries and of national allegiance, and political stability would disappear if this principle was uniformly applied." It was, he thought, a phrase "loaded with dynamite. It will raise hopes which can never be realized. It will, I fear, cost thousands of lives. In the end it is bound to be discredited, to be called the dream of an idealist who failed to realize the danger until too late to check those who attempt to put the principle in force." Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative* (Boston and New York, 1921), pp. 96-98.

For the clearest treatment of the right of secession in the Yugoslavian context, see Richard F. Iglar, "The Constitutional Crisis in Yugoslavia and the International Law of Self Determination: Slovenia's and Croatia's Right to Secede," *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol XV, No. 1, 1992, pp. 213-39. For an older but still valuable refutation of a right of secession, see Rupert Emerson, "Self-Determination," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 65, April 1971, pp. 459-75. For a different view, see Marc Weller, "The International Response to the Dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," *ibid*, Vol. 86, July 1992, pp. 569-607.

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fered the degree of oppression necessary to justify the natural right of revolution. It would be more accurate to say that the Muslims had a reasonable anticipation that they would suffer such oppression if they remained within the rump Yugoslavia; they acted, that is to say, against "tyranny anticipated" rather than "tyranny inflicted" (just as, in fact, the American colonists had done). That anticipation could not but appear as utterly compelling to the majority of the Muslims; all that has happened since the war broke out confirms it. What should draw objection, however, is the assumption that whereas the Muslims had every reason to fear living in a state dominated by the Serbs, the Serbs had no reason to fear living in a state dominated by the Muslims. That assumption is fundamentally implausible; it is, nevertheless, the unspoken assumption of the American government's position and of the dominant consensus in the United States regarding the origins of the war.

Shifts and Reversals

BEFORE CONSIDERING the consequences this American interpretation of the origins of the war had on the course of events in Bosnia, attention may first be drawn to the extremely awkward, and yet almost entirely unremarked, position in which it placed U.S. diplomacy. By the spring of 1992, our diplomacy was clearly directed toward the breakup of Yugoslavian territorial integrity on the basis of plebiscitary majorities in each of its constituent republics. Having previously taken the position, as James Baker did in Belgrade in the summer of 1991, that the United States favored the preservation of Yugoslavia's territorial integrity, American diplomacy did a sharp turn and pronounced itself in favor of Yugoslavia's partition. Once this partition had taken place, however, we once again insisted that the territorial integrity of the *new* states was something sacred and inviolable. Having defiled the principle of territorial integrity, the American government immediately rediscovered it in all its purity. Thereafter, any suggestion that these new boundaries be changed was subsequently met by the insistence, in the exasperated voice of outraged virtue, that to do so challenged the very basis of world order.

The reasons for this last attitude are clear. The shift in American policy toward Yugoslavia took place immediately after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Concerned primarily as they were with the potential for violence that this breakup might bring, and thinking of Russia as they considered Yugoslavia, American diplomatists searched for the means by which that potential might be mitigated. The parallels between the two situations, indeed, were eerily exact. Russia had her "famous twenty nine millions" outside the mother country; Serbia had a comparable percentage outside its borders. It seemed a sound approach to adopt the same policy toward both. Whatever the merits of this approach as applied to Russia, however, it was an unmitigated disaster as applied to Yugoslavia.

The new-found reverence for territorial integrity may well have played a crucial role in triggering the conflict in Bosnia. It is undoubtedly the case that the United States and the European Community encouraged the Izetbegovic government to hold the referendum on secession in the first place. It also appears to be true that the United States encouraged Izetbegovic to reject the EC-sponsored cantonization plan agreed upon in two separate meetings in late winter 1992.[4] Izetbegovic's repudiation of the second agreement on returning to Sarajevo was the immediate trigger for the war. Whether the Muslim leader repudiated this agreement because of pressure from militants at home, as Glenny has said, or because he understood America's advice to reject it as an implicit

[4]See Paul Lewis, "Two Leaders Propose Dividing Bosnia Into Three Areas," *New York Times*, June 17, 1993.

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pledge of military support, remains unclear. Given the distribution of military power in Bosnia at the time, the only way to make sense of Izetbegovic's decision is to assume that he did believe that the United States would make good on his military inferiority; the support Izetbegovic received from the United States to oppose cantonization may well have given him the confidence to take this fateful step. Certainly, the mournful voices coming out of Sarajevo once the war broke out attest to a sense of deep betrayal on the part of the Muslims.

The war may have occurred in any event. The Lisbon formula was vague in crucial respects, and contained no agreement respecting the boundaries of the three cantons. Extremists on all sides were certain to raise formidable objections to it. Whatever weight its rejection is assigned in bringing on the war, however, cannot detract from the judgment that American diplomats acted in an extremely irresponsible manner if, as reported, they advised Izetbegovic to reject the Lisbon formula. If war was to be averted, an agreement respecting cantonization was the last step at which it might have been. That the United States both encouraged the Muslims to take the steps that led toward war, and then subsequently abandoned them once the war broke out, is a damning indictment of American diplomacy—and one, moreover, that is likely to receive the assent of virtually all sides in the debate over intervention. Either we should not have encouraged them or we should not have abandoned them; it is difficult to think of a plausible defense for having done both.

Once fighting started, the understanding of the war that attributed it fundamentally to Serbian aggression had an equally bad effect on the diplomatic posture the United States adopted towards settling it. The passions and hatreds unleashed by the war were such that territorial partition almost immediately became the only basis on which a compromise settlement might be reached. Yet the United States consistently opposed all such proposals. A compromise settlement was ruled out by the terms of the UN resolution passed in late May 1992, under American prompting, which called for the disarmament of all irregular forces and the withdrawal of the Yugoslav federal army (JNA) from Bosnian territory. Only one reading of these resolutions was possible, and this was that they required as a condition for lifting the sanctions imposed on Serbia the establishment of the police power by the Sarajevo government over the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[5] Thereafter, the Bush administration opposed the interest expressed by London and Paris in a territorial partition before the August 1992 London conference. The incoming Clinton administration's opposition to the Vance-Owen plan was of a piece with this policy. The American interpretation of the war as one of Serbian aggression has made any compromise settlement vulnerable to the charge of rewarding aggression. As such, it precluded a negotiated settlement, and made it inevitable that the war would be decided by sheer military power.

The effects of this interpretation of the war on Serbia are also deserving of note. The reaction of Milosevic to the full court press he confronted from the United States and the international community was to abandon formally the claim of a Greater Serbia, while keeping it up in fact. In the hope, apparently, of avoiding UN sanctions, Serbia and Montenegro accordingly established a new state of Yugoslavia and simultaneously recognized the independence of Croatia and Bosnia. The JNA was formally withdrawn from Bosnian territory while at the same time its weapons, stores of ammunition, and most of its men passed to the control of the *Republika Srpska*. These maneuvers had about

[5]That these terms commanded impossibilities may be passed over as a minor point, but they assuredly did so. If the JNA was to be withdrawn, it could not disarm the irregular forces; if the arms embargo was continued on the Muslims, they could not do so either. Who then was to do it?

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them a farcical character. It was easily documented that Serbia continued to give support to the Bosnian Serbs; denials of this fact by Milosevic only confirmed his reputation as a liar. He was forced into this absurd position by the attitude taken by the international community, which stood foursquare behind the claim that Bosnia's secession was legal and that Yugoslavia had no right to prevent it by force. The effect, however, on the conduct of the war was pernicious. However bad the JNA's record had been in the Croatian war and in the beginning stages of the war in Bosnia, it had a better record than that of the Serbian irregular forces; to disband it was to invite an increase in the number of vile atrocities that have distinguished the war's conduct. This decision also weakened the link between Belgrade and the Bosnian Serbs, and made it more difficult for Milosevic to apply the kind of pressure on them necessary to reach a settlement.

Perhaps the most paradoxical effect that this understanding of the origins of the war had was on the prospect that the United States or the international community might use force to limit Serb territorial claims. For one thing, it made it much more difficult to reach a consensus either at the United Nations or within the Western alliance on the possible limited use of force. Given the objectives that flowed directly from the definition of the conflict as unadulterated Serbian aggression, it was evident that any limited use of force would leave unsatisfied the larger objective of "restoring" Bosnian territorial integrity, and that after the first drink, to paraphrase John F. Kennedy, it would be necessary to take another. If the objective were the disarmament of Serbian militias throughout Bosnia, it was a moral certainty that the Serbs would resist this through force, and that the objective could only be achieved through a major war. Just as the Americans were capable of vetoing diplomatic measures that pointed toward partition, the Europeans (and Russia) were capable of vetoing steps that pointed toward such a war. The end result, of course, was a stalemate at the UN and within the Alliance in which fervid denunciations of the war were paired with measures that held out no prospect of ending it on terms conformable to those laid out in UN resolutions.

The skepticism of the U.S. military toward any intervention in Bosnia was reinforced by the same considerations. By virtue of the overly ambitious objectives that the American understanding of the conflict entailed, every proposal to use limited force was highly vulnerable to the objection that it would not satisfy the aims American diplomacy had laid down. For the limited use of force, when paired with these highly ambitious goals, would have succeeded in ensuring precisely the kind of objective that the diplomatists had deemed totally unacceptable. There was no plausible end game in this scenario. Escalation was written all over it. Even had the JCS been willing to swallow its understandable reservations toward any kind of military involvement in the Balkans, it would not and could not digest the proposition that U.S. military forces be committed in a way that left a huge gap between the military means proposed and the political ends embraced.

"Lift and Strike"

IN THE DEBATE over intervention, the principal alternative to the course followed by western policy in the past year has come to be known as "lift and strike"—lifting the arms embargo against the Sarajevo government and striking Serbian forces with American airpower. There have been variations in the views of the numerous adherents to this approach, with some suggesting that Serbia proper be bombed immediately and others insisting that the first step ought to be targeting gun emplacements surrounding Sarajevo, while the threat of escalation to Serbia is held in reserve. Whatever their overall merits, the various options recommended for the use of airpower have been relatively clear; this is not true, however, of the "lift" portion of the strategy. How and

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where the training of Bosnian Muslims would take place, who would supply the arms, their method of delivery into Bosnia—these and other questions, however critical, have remained generally obscure. This is true not only of most commentaries in the media but also of the Clinton administration itself. The Clinton plan called for air strikes in Bosnia proper and neither disavowed nor threatened further aerial escalation. What it intended to do beyond lifting the legal prohibition at the UN on shipments of arms to the Muslims, however, remained unclear.

Whether this initiative, the culmination of months of indecision on the part of the incoming administration, was seriously meant cannot be known with assurance. The deliberate manner in which the decision was reached, the pallid message that Warren Christopher delivered on his "consultations" with European allies, did not bespeak great conviction. It had the air of a proposition uttered in an academic seminar, an opinion among conversationalists in the liberal arts, that was to be weighed, sifted, analyzed, amended, and indeed perhaps rejected if sufficiently serious flaws (admitted, of course, to exist) might be found in it. Clinton's tactics resembled more than a little those employed by Eisenhower during the Dien Bien Phu crisis of 1954, when the president used the search for a consensus in Congress and among the allies as the means of killing a plan of military intervention. Clinton appears to have followed a similar tack in the Bosnian crisis, and may indeed (as a careful student of Vietnam) have had the Eisenhower precedent in mind.

The mysteries associated with this initiative are not exhausted by whether it was seriously meant by Mr. Clinton. The most peculiar feature of "lift and strike" was the disparity between the limited means that were proposed and the stakes presumed to exist. This disparity has characterized most American commentary on the crisis. Advocates of intervention have nearly always combined a description of the crisis that recalled the 1930s with a fastidious aversion to the use of American ground forces that recalled the 1970s. If this aggression of the Serbs approached, in sheer evil, the worst crime of the century, a rather more robust conclusion than "lift and strike" would seem inexorably to follow. Yet, for nearly all commentators, and for the Clinton administration itself, it did not follow.

In assessing the plausibility of "lift and strike," it is necessary to recur again to the objectives to which this two-pronged strategy would have been married. The plan, or something like it, had been promised to the Muslims in exchange for their grudging support of the Vance-Owen plan; the attempt to change the balance of forces on the ground in Bosnia might therefore plausibly be read as an attempt to provide the Sarajevo government with sufficient military leverage to obtain an approximation of the territorial lines that had been contemplated in that settlement. But since the Clinton administration had itself made clear on coming into office that it considered Vance Owen seriously defective, on the grounds that it rewarded aggression, and since the Izetbegovic government clearly adhered to the same opinion, it seems fair to infer that the plan of intervention, if such it can be called, anticipated a change in military possession well beyond that contemplated in the Vance-Owen plan. The larger political objective of "restoring" Bosnia's territorial integrity had not been formally abandoned, and there was strong U.S. support for arraigning Serb leaders in war crimes trials. As the main precedents for such action were the war crimes trials after World War II, which were only made possible because of the complete defeat and occupation of Germany and Japan, it was not implausible to give a rather expansive reading to the war aims the United States might pursue.

How far these objectives would have reached is unclear; what is clear is that the Serbs would have seen this intervention as being highly injurious to their vital interests and would have fought it tenaciously. This

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may appear a less than surprising conclusion, but it had several important implications. That many of the arms would have to pass through Croatia (which had by this time repudiated its former uneasy alliance with the Muslims) was perhaps the least of the difficulties. Of greater importance was that whatever areas chosen for the receipt of arms and for training would have become highly significant military targets. The plan would have ensured that enemy forces (probably the Croats as well as the Serbs) had a vital interest in attacking, and no interest in respecting, any safe haven in central Bosnia. Given their military dominance, a race would likely have set in between the ability of the Serbs to render these areas militarily untenable and the ability of the U.S. to prevent this result. It was almost wholly implausible to believe that this result might be achieved with airpower alone. Yet the use of U.S. ground forces to prevent this result, not only in the Clinton plan but in most such plans, was precluded.

The situation would have produced strong pressures on the United States to escalate the air war. Attacks on Serbia itself, which a large number of the advocates of intervention (though not the Clinton administration itself) had always advocated, would almost inevitably have followed. Whether these attacks would have reached Belgrade's infrastructure, as some proposed, is unclear; that this was seriously suggested is a depressing commentary on the expedients to which the mismatch between our high objectives and our unwillingness to expose American forces seems regularly to lead. It does seem clear, in any case, that carrying the air war into Serbia would not have ended the conflict, and that its only effective function would have been to punish the Serbs. Taken together with the stated aims of policy, "lift and strike" promised nothing so much as a further enlargement of the doughnut of Lebanonization, narrowing the inner circle and extending the outer one, at potentially grave cost to our real interest in European order.

What is at Stake?

IT IS A STRIKING feature of the debate over the Balkan war that the critically important issue of interest has only seldom been seriously addressed. When interest has not simply been denied or subordinated to humanitarian claims, it has more often than not been invoked in terms of universal principle. Thus it has been contended by many urging America's intervention in the conflict that the vital national interest at stake in Bosnia is nothing less than world order. On this view, the principle forbidding aggression is the very basis of world order and it requires that Serbia's aggression against Bosnia be repelled. The debate over interest has been carried on between those entertaining radically opposed positions, between those who find very little at stake and those who find almost everything at stake, between those who do not see beyond Bosnia and those who soar over the Balkans and Europe and see the world. As a result, the critical middle ground of interest, Europe, has been neglected.

The inadequacy with which interest has been considered in the debate over Bosnia is equally apparent in the unfolding of American policy. While the Bush Administration did consistently oppose any partition of Bosnia, it made very little effort to clarify the interests at stake in supporting Bosnia's territorial integrity. A policy of encouraging the Muslims to resist any kind of feasible settlement with the Serbs, which necessitated accepting a partition of some sort, was attended by the refusal either to give the Muslims any active military support or even to assist them in obtaining arms from abroad by ending the UN embargo on arms.

The Clinton administration came to office highly critical of its predecessor's record, particularly the Bush Administration's failure to work toward lifting the arms embargo. It did not appear to come to office with a clearer view of the nation's interests in the Balkan war. Mr. Clinton's view of the

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conflict had always been marked by a certain confusion. Intent as a candidate on helping the Bosnians, he was also determined that we must not get involved in the quagmire. This insistence that help must be given but involvement avoided has persisted. On the eve of deciding upon the pursuit of a "lift and strike" policy in Bosnia, in the spring of 1993, Mr. Clinton was still determined that "The United States is not, should not, become involved as a partisan in a war."

Given this insistence upon altering the course of the conflict while standing aside from it, of becoming involved while remaining withdrawn, the president's failure to articulate the nation's interests consistently and persuasively in the Balkan conflict is not surprising. Occasionally, Mr. Clinton has insisted that our interest is strictly humanitarian. Taken by itself, however, it has never been clear why this should constitute an interest sufficient to justify American intervention, for if this is the basis the number of cases in which it ought to be applied is very large indeed.

On only one public occasion has the president given a considered statement of the interests at stake in the Balkan conflict. Speaking before a World Bank conference on May 7, 1993, Mr. Clinton declared:

> The Serbs' actions over the past year violate the principle that internationally recognized borders must not be violated or altered by aggression from without. Their actions threaten to widen the conflict and foster instability in other parts of Europe in ways that could be exceedingly damaging. And their savage and cynical ethnic cleansing offends the world's conscience and our standards of behavior.

It does not help in assessing the administration's position that this statement has since been contradicted, and on more than one occasion, by Mr. Clinton's secretary of state. While the president in the above quoted address stated that the nation does have "fundamental interests" at stake in the Bosnian conflict, his secretary of state has declared that the war "does not involve our vital interests." The war in Bosnia, Mr. Warren Christopher has explained, involves our "humanitarian concerns" only, not our strategic interests. Indeed, having decided to distance themselves from the war as a result of their failure to persuade the European allies to support a "lift and strike" policy, both the president and the secretary of state began to characterize Bosnia as a civil rather than an international conflict. The change, though not consistently adhered to, was indicative of what may yet prove to be the complete abandonment of a position to which the president had so recently appeared firmly committed.

Mr. Clinton may always reclaim the position he took in May. Having changed his position in the past, he may change it again. If he does, it will be to embrace a view that was flawed then and remains flawed today. It will not do to identify America's interest in the Balkan conflict primarily with the prevention of aggression. It will not do if only because the war did not arise as a simple case of aggression and the endless repetition that it did will neither make it true nor persuade a skeptical public. Even if that view of the origins did gain more acceptance than might reasonably be expected, it still could not be counted on to support the anticipated costs of military intervention. It did not do so in the Persian Gulf, where the interest in oil was clear and compelling, and it would not do so in Bosnia. Nor would humanitarian concerns succeed where a world order interest had failed.

If there is a vital American interest at stake in the Balkan war, it is to be found not in world order but in European order. The great issue of foreign policy Bosnia has raised—or at least *should* have raised—is that of our interest and role in Europe, now that the Cold War is over. Earlier circumstances were such as to make our interest apparent and compelling. A Soviet dominated Europe, it was believed, would seriously endanger the security and independence of the United States. It would do so by virtue of the

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immense resources that a Soviet-dominated Europe would place at the disposal of a state that insisted on seeing us as their enemy. Beyond these considerations, the American interest in Europe extended to the preservation of a political and economic order in which free institutions would flourish.

All this ensured that whatever the differences we had with our European allies—whether over extra-European issues, over burdensharing, over strategy for meeting the Soviet threat, or even over what constituted the requisite degree of loyalty to the alliance itself—would be overcome by the need that each side of the Atlantic had for the other. In the phrase that was often used to characterize the transatlantic relationship, Europe and the United States shared a "community of fate," and although the phrase surely overstated the nature of the bonds between the two sides of the Atlantic, it also expressed a profound truth about a relationship of mutual dependency that did exist. It may be recalled that only a decade ago, during the Euromissile crisis, this truth was put to the test in circumstances that were seen by many American and Europeans alike as heralding a serious crisis in the alliance, even perhaps eventuating in its breakup. But the institution that was judged at the time by not a few expert observers as having become an "empty shell" survived and went on to play a significant role in the concluding chapter of the cold war.

It is a measure of the distance we have come in the very few years since the end of the Cold War that an American secretary of state can refer to a war that may well have serious consequences for Europe's stability as "a humanitarian crisis a long way from home, in the middle of another continent." It is perhaps a still more striking indication of the change in the relationship that formed the principal pillar of the post World War II order that Mr. Christopher can characterize America's role to date in the Balkan conflict as "proportionate to what our responsibilities are" and to insist that "we can't do it all." These statements, taken together with a corresponding pattern of behavior, raise the question: is Bosnia a portent of a readiness to abandon a once Eurocentric policy? And if it is, what is the rationale for so momentous a change? Mr. Christopher has said, and the president apparently agrees, that the Balkan war is primarily a European problem. But the evidence is abundant that it is a European problem that has already had a damaging impact on the credibility and integrity of the western alliance. It is also clear that the image of the European Community has suffered greatly from its failure to resolve satisfactorily the war being fought on its doorstep. Nor is it only the collective impotence of the Community that must cause concern, for the Balkan war has prompted the leading states of Europe to pursue separate and often conflicting policies toward the war in a manner reminiscent of a past that few wish to see revived.

Is an American government now to remain largely indifferent to these and other consequences of a failure to deal effectively and satisfactorily with the Balkan conflict? To respond that the conflict is primarily a European problem is to acknowledge that the possible consequences of failure do not engage our interest or, at any rate, do not engage our interest sufficiently to warrant committing ourselves militarily in a manner the American government has so far refused to do. But if this is the case, then a momentous change has indeed occurred in the nation's foreign policy. It has occurred not because our resources are limited and we cannot impose our will everywhere, all of which is certainly true, but because we have determined, consciously or unconsciously, that what was once our most vital interest no longer merits even the modest commitment (modest by former standards of the cold war) that Bosnia might require. It no longer merits this commitment, not because the Europeans could themselves satisfactorily resolve the problems of Bosnia if they had sufficient will to do so, which is assuredly the case, but

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because we no longer have the interest to do so. We are playing a game with Europe that we have played before. During the cold war, that game was always won by Europe, since the American interest in the security and independence of Europe in the end assured Europe of victory. The game has apparently changed, however, and Europe may now become the loser.

Europe would become the loser at a critical juncture in its history. In the wake of a bad outcome in the Balkans, one that left the door open to a wider conflict in southeastern Europe and that was productive of still greater disarray in the alliance, European stability would be put at risk. In the recriminations that would inevitably ensue, the United States could not be expected to withdraw entirely its military presence from Europe but its commitment to Europe would almost assuredly be weakened. So too, the EC would be further weakened. Having failed to act cooperatively and effectively, the major European states could be expected to fashion their own separate policies to deal with future instability in eastern and southeastern Europe. In these circumstances, the great problem of order in a post-Cold War Europe would almost surely be exacerbated.

That problem, at the heart of which is the question of how to accommodate German power with the least amount of tension and instability, has yet to be squarely addressed. It cannot be postponed indefinitely. Eventually, the most powerful state in Europe will entertain pretensions to a role and status commensurate with its power. In doing so, it is bound to stimulate the suspicions and unease of a continent that has not forgotten the past. In the absence of the United States, and of a still credible American military presence, how would Europe deal with the problem of German power? Simply to pose the question is tantamount to articulating the principal reason for maintaining the substance of the American relationship of the past half century with Europe. The withdrawal of America's power from and commitment to Europe would leave Germany dominant yet insecure. Indeed, its very dominance might well prove to be the principal source of its insecurity, for it could not fail to sense the fears others would entertain of its dominant role. A familiar cycle might set in, one that in the past has all too often resulted in an expansionist policy. That in this instance the expansion would take an economic rather than a military expression would not thereby render its consequences harmless. The fears of others might still prove strong enough to generate a rising instability and to deal a setback to European cooperation from which it would not recover.

It is difficult to believe that the American government is now indifferent to these prospects or that it is unmindful of the need to fit German power into a European order in which the constraints of the cold war are no more. The balancing of German power and the reassurance of Germany's neighbors cannot be done without the continued commitment (and presence) of American power—a power that in the course of balancing German power would also serve to reconcile Europe to that power. Whether the United States is capable of playing this role may well be questioned. It is not one particularly congenial to the nation's diplomatic traditions. Nor does it accord with America's post World War II experience in Europe. That the nation would have to play this complex and difficult role at a time when its power in Europe will in any event be declining can only add to the difficulty of the task. Still, this is the task that will have to be addressed if America's interest in a stable European order is to be maintained. Yet it is this interest that the Administration's response to the conflict in the Balkans has placed in question. That response must raise profound doubt about America's continued willingness and ability to remain the ultimate guarantor of order in post-Cold War Europe.

It is painfully clear that the war in Bosnia

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provides an inauspicious occasion for reaffirming the continuity of the American interest in Europe. The circumstances attending any American intervention in Bosnia are such as to hold out the real possibility of failure, one that could prove disastrous for America's presence and future role in Europe. But passivity must also entail a price, and it is likely to be very high. Had American governments never deigned to take serious note of Bosnia, the risks of inaction might have been kept modest. This was not the course that was taken, however, and now the consequences of our previous actions must be faced.

The End Game

THE GREAT DEFECT of American policy toward Bosnia has stemmed from the disjunction between ends that were overly ambitious and means that were plainly inadequate to the stated objectives. The alternative to the policy that was followed would have been to combine an insistence on limited ends with a determination to employ forcible means. An armed mediation conducted on the basis of a territorial partition would have had several advantages over the course which was followed. By tying the threatened use of force against the Serbs to limited territorial objectives, it would have offered the Serbs terms that, though falling well short of their maximal territorial aims, would nevertheless have respected their vital interests and provided them with a strong incentive toward reaching a compromise settlement. At the same time, it would have made clear at the outset to the Muslims that Western support was conditional upon their acceptance of the principle of partition, instead of encouraging the delusion—for delusion it was—that outside intervention would achieve their dream of establishing a unitary Bosnian state. Finally, had the American position been framed in these terms, it would have provided the basis for a unified and credible NATO strategy.

Whether the general elements of such a strategy can be reconstituted today may well be questioned. The disarray within the Western alliance, the contempt with which the Serbs have learned to treat Western threats of intervention, and the general deterioration of Muslim defenses have combined to produce a precarious situation on the ground. Nevertheless, there are changes in the American position that could make a real difference in the Bosnian end game, and that ought to be vigorously pursued.

The first is strong American support for the principle of territorial partition. No useful purpose is served at this late date by repeating the undoubted truth that partition sets a bad example and ought to be resisted wherever possible. For the more relevant truth is that it is the worst of solutions except when it is the only one. Given the ferocity of the fighting that has occurred, it is against nature to expect that the three nations can restore at any time in the near future the decent relations that once existed among them. With few exceptions, they cannot live side-by-side and must be separated. Resistance to partition also carries with it the signal disadvantage of weakening the connection between the Bosnian Serbs and Croats and their co-religionists in Belgrade and Zagreb. It would be far better from the standpoint of enforcing a settlement if the Serb and Croat entities in Bosnia proposed under the Serb-Croat partition plans were abolished and the territories they received in a settlement absorbed by the mother states. Any workable settlement must rest on the ability and willingness of Serbia and Croatia to rein in their own extremists; the establishment of separate Serbian and Croatian states within Bosnia works strongly against this criterion.

A territorial settlement that left the Muslims at the mercy of their enemies would evidently not constitute a satisfactory long-term solution. It should therefore be a basic objective of Western diplomacy to get for the surviving remnant of Bosnia as much territory as we can while providing it with credible mil-

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itary guarantees. Although it is difficult to speculate on the form these boundaries might take, a few guidelines are apparent. The Muslims ought to be accorded between 30 and 35 percent of Bosnian territory in east central Bosnia and Bihac, and they ought to be given Sarajevo. As the Serbs are a largely rural population and worked nearly 60 percent of the land before the war, it is not unreasonable, quite apart from their existing position of military dominance, that they be given a larger territorial share. Nor ought they to be denied a defensible corridor in the north linking Serb territories. By the same token, however, the largely urban character of the Muslim population, together with the success of the collective presidency in maintaining a multi-ethnic coalition, gives the Izetbegovic government a strong claim to Sarajevo, whose division would in any case provide a fertile ground for future controversy. On the indispensable condition that the Izetbegovic government accepts a territorial compromise, the United States and its allies should hold out for these terms and should be prepared to go to war if the Serbs and Croats will not agree to them. Such a threat cannot be confined to air strikes but must include a willingness to introduce substantial NATO ground forces into central Bosnia.

A settlement among the parties obviously provides the most desirable outcome of the Bosnian war. It should be that settlement at which U.S. diplomacy is primarily aimed even while we accept war against Bosnia's Serbs (and possibly against the Croats) as a possible outcome of our diplomatic posture. No such settlement is likely to be reached, however, in the absence of a willingness on the part of the Western powers to guarantee it. That such a settlement must include a definitive territorial resolution of the Serbo-Croatian conflict and the end of economic sanctions against Serbia seems clear. If it is to be politically effective and morally tolerable, it must also make adequate provision for the critical period of transition. It is in the first stages of a partition that the dangers to human life are greatest; the beginning stages of the agreement's implementation therefore require a large scale commitment of allied forces. Once the lines have stabilized, this force might be drawn down substantially, and its mission would change from ensuring the rescue, protection, and resettlement of civilians to policing clear borders. People would enjoy the right of going to, or staying in, the territories in which they felt safest.

However strong the case for American intervention, it remains a distressing fact that the kind of intervention that is most justified is also the one the United States seems least inclined to undertake. The most insistent advocates of intervention want a war of righteous indignation to "restore Bosnia" and punish the Serbs, a crusade that could only be carried out in defiance of our NATO allies. It would be supremely ironic were such advocacy to badly prejudice the possibility of containing the magnitude of the catastrophe befalling the Muslims, but such has been the record thus far. The maximalists on Bosnia imagine that their vehemence can do no harm if it pushes the government forward with a plan of intervention; they neglect to consider that the prospect of a war informed by maximalist aims inevitably provokes the passionate opposition of states with whom—given the interests at stake—we ought and need to act in concert. Their heated rhetoric retards, rather than advances, the prospect of an intervention, and it has done so from the beginning.

Clinton's policy, by contrast, works within the constraints set by allies who despise the maximalists and maximalists who despise the allies; hence both its desire to key its threats of force to the lowest common denominator—the continuation of the humanitarian aid missions—and its unwillingness to embrace the principle of partition. Unfortunately, a policy so constrained is likely to succeed only in perpetuating the war through another winter. The American government badly needs to break the mold it has set for itself and pledge its power to a definitive settlement. □

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The "1205 Document"

A Story of American Prisoners, Vietnamese Agents, Soviet Archives, Washington Bureaucrats, and the Media

Stephen J. Morris

LAST JANUARY, I was sitting in the former headquarters of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, reading top-secret Soviet files about the Vietnam war. While turning the pages of a file, I unexpectedly came upon a startling document by a Vietnamese Communist general. It was a Russian translation of a report dated September 15, 1972 by Lieutenant General Tran Van Quang to the Vietnamese Worker's (Communist) Party politburo, detailing the number of American prisoners of war held by the North Vietnamese on that date. The document was the product of the former Soviet Armed Forces Main Intelligence Directorate (*Glavnoye Razvedivatelnoye Upravleniye*—GRU). Though I was unfamiliar with the details of the controversy surrounding missing American servicemen, I knew enough to realize immediately that the number of prisoners cited by the Vietnamese general—1205—exceeded the number of American POWs who were actually released six months later in early 1973, under the terms of the Paris Peace Agreement, by more than seven hundred. If the information in the document was accurate, its implications were likely to be explosive.

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In the document General Quang described the American prisoners as being divided into three political categories—"progressives," "neutral," and "reactionary." The "progressives" would be released first. More important, Quang stated that Hanoi had created a separate secret camp system unknown to other prisoners. He acknowledged that in public Hanoi had deliberately understated the number of prisoners it was holding. Quang explained that Vietnamese communist policy was eventually to use the secret prisoners to achieve all its political, military, and economic objectives.

The archive in which I discovered the document bears the unassuming title of the Center for the Preservation of Contemporary Documents.[1] It is just one of several major archives of the former Soviet Union's ruling party-state command center, which were requisitioned and sealed by Boris Yeltsin in the immediate aftermath of the abortive coup d'état of August 1991. I was engaged in research on projects that had nothing specifically to do with American prisoners of war and missing in action. The MIA issue was not an area of my professional interest.

My initial archival work in Moscow began in October 1992, when I worked on my own and was restricted to the pre-1953 Central Committee Archive. But by

[1]In Russian: *Tsentr khraneniia sovremennoi dokumentatsii.*

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November I was affiliated with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Cold War International History Project, and enjoyed the special access to the post-1953 archives allowed by the Russians to such scholars.

The procedures for work at the archive are of some importance. Although the archivists knew of my topics, they did not know which files I would be requesting until the day I actually made the specific request. In fact, my own decisions about what files to request were made on a day-by-day basis and depended upon my ongoing reading of the *Opisi* (the folio catalogues). Following a request for files and their location by staff, the files would be screened by a senior archivist named Yuri Konstantinovich Maalov, who had the right to reject any particular request. As was the case with other researchers, all the files that I requested to see had not yet been officially declassified, and almost all were marked secret or top secret. Maalov refused me access to only two or three of all the files that I asked for during the time I worked there. But he did threaten to stop my archival access completely on other occasions. For anyone familiar with procedures at the archive, the suggestion made by Hanoi and some of its Western acolytes that the document was planted is absurd.

The first weeks of my work were devoted to the origins of Vietnam's decision to invade Cambodia. Then in mid-December I switched to a second project on the history of American intervention in Vietnam. As I knew that I might not have the time to research the entire historical period, and as the years 1972 and 1973 were central to one of the main arguments of my book, I began by asking for material for those years. All of the files requested came from the central committee department dealing with "Communist and Workers' Parties in Socialist Countries," i.e. ruling Communist parties. Most of them originated in the Soviet foreign ministry, and most consisted of reports from the Soviet embassy in Hanoi. A very few were KGB field reports or analyses, and a few others were reports of the Soviet Army General Staff, including those of the GRU.

On December 14, 1993 I requested ten files dealing with the year 1972. The set of requests was vetted and approved by Maalov on December 15 and I received them in the Archive reading hall on December 16. Because I was backed up with reading previously ordered files, and with Christmas and the New Year intervening, I did not reach the 1972 Soviet military file until January 1993. I did not discover any information about American POWs until I read the last section of the very last document in the file, on or about January 8. My initial reaction to what it contained was a mixture of shock and excitement. But it was only several days later, after telephone calls to better informed acquaintances in the United States, that I was certain that the document was of great significance. Only after several more days of inquiry at the U.S. embassy, did I realize that the U.S. government knew nothing about it.

Context and Evaluation

THE DOCUMENT in question deals with more than the issue of American POWs being held in North Vietnam. That subject is addressed in only eight pages towards the end of its twenty-five pages. The rest of the document deals with two other issues: the attempt of the Vietnamese Communists to seduce disgruntled South Vietnamese generals and politicians into joining a coalition government with the Communists; and the dispatch of a team of assassins to carry out a campaign of terrorist subversion in South Vietnam.

The document was located in a file of the Soviet general staff which contained other documents all dated and pertaining to events occurring during the year 1972. In contrast with the files containing documents of the Soviet foreign ministry for 1972, the Soviet military files contained information of

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a highly sensitive nature and indicate that ties between the Soviet and Vietnamese military were close and informal at this time. This is not surprising, as between 1968 and 1972 the Vietnamese Communists shifted from neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute to a pro-Soviet foreign policy. Hanoi's army was re-equipped from the Soviet arsenal and reoriented itself in line with Soviet military doctrine. More Vietnamese officers were trained in Soviet military academies, and closer relations evolved between Soviet military advisers and Vietnamese military officers.

Clearly the document is the product of Soviet intelligence work. Having read the entire Soviet military file, I conclude that the Soviet military's GRU had a Vietnamese agent placed at a very high level of the Vietnamese party. This conclusion is critical for evaluating the document at issue. For it entails, among other things, that Quang's speech was prepared for the Vietnamese politburo, not for a Soviet audience.

Furthermore, the style of the document is clearly that of an oral report, not a written speech. This is most apparent in the section in which Quang carefully recites statistical data with no concern for sentence structure. It is therefore likely that the document is the translation of a transcript (either written notes or a tape recording) of a speech by General Quang. It is also likely that the translation was undertaken by a GRU case officer from the notes or tape recording provided by a well-placed Vietnamese agent. This assumption makes it easier to explain the document's possible factual inaccuracies.

More important is the endorsement of the document's authenticity and value by two key Soviet officials at the time. The then head of the Soviet GRU, General Pyotr Ivashutin, signed an executive summary of the document which was sent to the central committee. The member of the CPSU secretariat responsible for relations with ruling Communist parties, Konstantin Katushev, wrote a handwritten instruction across the front of Ivashutin's executive summary ordering his deputy to prepare a brief report on the prisoners of war for the CPSU politburo. These officials clearly believed that the report was significant and basically accurate. Ivashutin had by that time held his important post for twelve years, and his judgment must carry considerable weight. Both he and Katushev were well schooled in the art of political disinformation and deception, and were most unlikely to have been fooled by any effort in that direction on the part of the Vietnamese. Further, if as I have suggested this document, like others in the file, was passed by a Vietnamese agent, the question arises: What motive could such an agent have had for deceiving the Soviets on such a matter?

These considerations lead to the conclusion that the original Vietnamese source of the Russian document was *probably* an authentic Vietnamese transcript (handwritten notes or tape recording) of an oral report by General Quang to his politburo. But the Vietnamese transcript was then translated into Russian, with some editorial comments by the Russians, a process that allowed for error. Further, the translation may have had to be undertaken in a rushed manner, with the transcript available for only a limited time, which would have increased the chance of errors.

A fundamental starting point for any evaluation of the Soviet GRU document is to recognize that the Pentagon's database on Vietnam POWs/MIAs rests heavily upon information supplied by those former prisoners who returned to the United States in 1973 during Operation Homecoming. If, as the GRU document states, there was a separate prison system, of which the returnees knew nothing—and keeping them in ignorance would have been precisely the point of holding people separately—then the Pentagon database cannot be used for a conclusive evaluation of the GRU document. This is true not only for quantitative data (numbers of prisoners, numbers of each rank) but also for qualitative data (the mixing of ranks, special

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training, and other characteristics of the prisoners). The frequent refrain of Pentagon officials—that "nobody who came back reported this"—is therefore simply beside the point. Furthermore, the challenge to the quality of Pentagon intelligence by Russian sources must be taken seriously. After all, the Soviet military intelligence was politically and physically much closer to the Vietnamese Communists in 1972 than was its American equivalent.

Does this mean that the Russian document is completely accurate? Not at all. General Quang may have been misled by his subordinates on many aspects of the POWs. Some of the names in the document were garbled. The ranks and level of training of the prisoners may have been inflated, which could reflect incompetence or attempts by lower level commanders and interrogators to impress superiors. Again, prisoners may have misinformed interrogators in order to secure better treatment for themselves. And there is the previously discussed problem of a hurried translation.

Nevertheless some key factual aspects of the document have already been confirmed. As the document predicted would happen, three prisoners were released within days. The document's claim that prisoners were placed in one of three political categories was reported long ago in Admiral Stockdale's prison memoir *In Love and War*.[2] This political categorization did not entail physical separation, though some, not all, in the "reactionary" category may have been kept in a separate camp system. We know that some of those who returned in 1973 had been held separately, unknown to the other returnees, until the very last moment. This confirms the possibility of a separate camp system holding hundreds of others. And the assertion that some prisoners had undertaken cosmonaut training is confirmed by the case of now Admiral Robert Harper Shumaker, a Navy flier shot down in 1965 and returned in 1973.

More important is the correlation of Hanoi's negotiating stance, as enunciated by Quang, with the secret negotiating position of the Vietnamese Communists at the time. Recently declassified cables, and the testimony of Dr. Henry Kissinger, confirm this.[3]

There are three factual claims made by the document which are matters of contention: Was Quang a lieutenant general in 1972, as the document claims, or was he at that time only major general, as the Vietnamese Communists claim? Did Quang hold the position of deputy chief of staff, as the document claims, or was he serving in that capacity only during 1959-60 and from 1974 on, as the Vietnamese Communists subsequently claimed? And was a 23rd plenum of the Vietnamese politburo held in 1972 as the document claims, or was it held in 1974 as the Vietnamese Communists have subsequently claimed? These are matters about which the independent evidence is mixed.

The former U.S. Embassy Saigon's 1972 report on the membership of the Central Military Committee lists Quang as deputy chief of staff, while a biographical report from Vietnam dated November 1992 lists him as holding a field command but not the deputy chief of staff position. Yet he could have held both positions. There were always several deputy chiefs of staff, and some of these also held field commands.[4] The failure of the 1992 North Vietnamese publication to list Quang in a deputy chief's position may simply reflect the post's lesser significance relative to the field command.

As for Quang's rank of lieutenant general, this was what he was described as in another Russian document, purportedly

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[2]New York, 1984, p. 254.

[3]For details see: MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, April 13, 1992; also Senator Bob Smith, *An Interim Analysis*, July 21, 1993. pp. 25-27.

[4]In 1972 the most prominent of these was Lieutenant General Hoang Van Thai, the head of COSVN, the biggest field command of all.

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based upon a June 26, 1972 report by Quang to the politburo and having nothing to do with the POW issue. This suggests that if there was an error, it was a genuine error by the Soviet case officer or Vietnamese agent, and had nothing to do with either the issue of prisoners or an attempt to deceive.

Finally the question of whether there was a 23rd politburo plenum in 1972 or in 1974 as the Vietnamese subsequently claimed is also a minor issue, and arises from a reference in a section of the document dealing with issues unrelated to the American POWs. There was a 21st plenum in 1972, and either the Vietnamese agent or the Soviet case officer may have misheard the word "21st" for "23rd."

The only incontrovertible and strange error in the Russian document—the conflation of a General Ngo Dzu with politician Truong Dinh Dzu into a nonexistent "General Ngo Dinh Dzu"—is minor. It does not appear in the section of the document dealing with the American POWs. Read carefully, Quang seems to be speaking about the politician first and the general later. The error, likely made by the Soviet GRU translator, more familiar with generals than civilians, is perfectly explicable if we assume an audio tape source.

We must distinguish between what data was primary and what was secondary in the report. The most basic facts are that a senior North Vietnamese general told his politburo that they were holding hundreds more American prisoners than the number they had told the world about; and that the Hanoi politburo planned to use these prisoners as a device to extract military, political and economic concessions from the United States. These are matters of clear meaning which are not easily subject to linguistic ambiguity or error.

This central aspect of the document is given contextual support by an examination of the entire file in which it was located. It is very clear from reading all of the Soviet military intelligence reports emanating from Vietnam in 1972 that the Easter Offensive of that year was a serious military failure for North Vietnam.[5] Hanoi had become pessimistic about its ability to win militarily. That is why holding back prisoners was important—the communists needed the American prisoners as a bargaining chip.

Hanoi almost certainly held back hundreds of prisoners in 1973. The most controversial aspect of the document, Quang's claim to be holding 1205 Americans, has been independently corroborated. In 1971 a North Vietnamese military doctor, Dang Tan, who defected to the South, told the U.S. government that North Vietnam was holding hundreds more prisoners than they had acknowledged. In 1979 a Vietnamese communist defector named Le Dinh told the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) that in the mid-1970s his colleagues had spoken of holding seven hundred American prisoners to be used as a "strategic bargaining asset."

Why, then, has this card never been played subsequently? Perhaps all the prisoners were executed in 1975 or some time later, after the unexpected collapse of South Vietnam seemed to make such a bargaining asset unnecessary. It is at least possible that

[5]Most striking is the contrast between the content of Quang's June 26 report and his September 15 report. In the earlier report he admits that Hanoi has suffered tremendously (140,000 losses) but confidently predicts military victories, particularly the capture of Hue by September, with the object of preventing the reelection of Nixon. North Vietnam not only did not capture Hue, they never came close. Their forces were devastated by American air power. The South Vietnamese "puppet" army not only did not collapse, but held every provincial capital except Quang Tri, which it recaptured on September 16. According to another Soviet intelligence document North Vietnamese losses in the Easter Offensive were 200,000.

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some prisoners are still being held as the very last card, in case the attempt to gain normalization through investment offers to American businesses does not sway Washington.

Back in Washington

AN OBJECTIVE evaluation of the accuracy of the information in the Soviet GRU document is of fundamental importance for the formulation of American policy towards Vietnam. The view that the document must be taken seriously has been endorsed by Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Richard Pipes, Adam Ulam, and Samuel Huntington. All are distinguished scholars, with either extensive knowledge of Soviet affairs, or extensive experience in dealing with Moscow, or both. Although nobody of their intellectual caliber has taken an opposing view, from the very beginning the Clinton administration has not handled the issue issue with the appropriate seriousness.

My first inclination after discovering the document in January was to give a copy of it immediately to the *New York Times*. On reflection I quickly concluded that as some prisoners might still be alive and their lives at risk, I was morally obliged first to inform the United States government. To this end, immediately upon my return to the United States on January 31 I contacted a Congressional staffer whom I knew well, and sought his assistance. He faxed a letter to the chief of staff of the NSC, Nancy Soderberg, on February 1, and followed up with a phone call to her on February 3. But in spite of this staffer's high personal reputation, no one from the NSC contacted me until after I had, more than one week later and in frustration, brought this matter to the attention of the office of the secretary of defense through the personal efforts of Professors Richard Pipes and Samuel Huntington of Harvard.

On February 9 I was finally contacted by Deputy NSC Adviser Samuel "Sandy" Berger who agreed to meet me. He asked if I would give him a copy of the document. I suggested that we discuss it. At our meeting on February 11 I explained to Berger that I did not want the document to reach the bureaucracy as I feared that it would either be leaked or treated in a negatively biased way, because it ran counter to everything the relevant bureaucrats had been saying on this matter for over twenty years. But I provided Berger with the names of three "authenticators" of the document—Zbigniew Brzezinski, Richard Pipes, and Mark Kramer, all Russian-literate scholars who were familiar with Soviet documents in general and who had read this one in particular. (The first was also a former national security adviser to the president, the second a former member of the NSC staff, and the third a young scholar whom NSC chief of staff Soderberg knew personally and had consulted many times). Moreover, I emphasized that this document was the beginning of the story, not the end. The fate of these men could only be determined through other Soviet documents, located in other Russian archives to which I currently had no access. I said that I wanted to pursue this story in Moscow with the U.S. government's help.

Berger did not ask for the document, obviously aware of my reluctance to hand it over, although in fact I had come prepared to show it and my English translation of the key sections to him. Instead he asked for key pieces of information from it so that it could be checked out by the relevant government experts. I provided him with a prepared two page memorandum which provided this, and which also explained where the document came from, why it was credible, and how the matter could be pursued further in Moscow.

I requested that my memorandum be kept out of the hands of the bureaucracy. Although I had never met nor even heard of the Department of Defense's MIA bureaucracy before that week, I instinctively feared that their concern with this issue would amount to nothing more elevated than

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defending personal reputation and political damage control. Although Berger said he would contact me again in a week, that was the last I saw or heard of him for five weeks, despite several follow-up calls on my part.

Meanwhile Zbigniew Brzezinski, to whom I had shown the document on February 10, informed Tony Lake of the document's contents and political credibility over lunch on February 18. According to Brzezinski, Lake was interested and shocked by his account. But this intervention produced no discernible effect.

NSC chief of staff Soderberg sent the detailed memorandum which she had received from the congressional staffer, not the briefer memorandum I had given to Berger, to the Department of Defense for evaluation. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, who had been informed by Pipes of the seriousness of the document and my willingness to publish it, instructed his subordinates to try to get a copy of the document from me. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs Ed Ross and Colonel Stuart Herrington of Task Force Russia (the Pentagon's support group for the U.S./Russia Commission on POW/MIAs) acted on that instruction, but were unsuccessful. At some point somebody decided that the U.S. government would try to acquire its own copy through the Commission.[6]

But in the interim the analytical division of the Defense Intelligence Agency and Ed Ross had already made up their minds about the value of the document. When Sandy Berger finally called me back on March 17th, he asked me whether the document referred only to Americans. He told me that he had been advised that if the 1205 figure referred to other nationalities as well as Americans, then there was no problem for the DOD data base, but that if the document referred only to Americans then it was inconsistent with the information that the government had. I expressed to Berger my absolute certainty that the document was discussing only Americans.

In subsequent weeks I had conversations with the belatedly appointed NSC specialist on Asia, Kent Weiderman. The career foreign service officer seemed genuinely concerned about the document and indicated that he took its contents seriously. Weiderman said he would try to arrange a meeting for me with Lake and Berger. He asked whether I would be willing to bring a copy of the document and I agreed to so do. But he was never able to organize a meeting.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that either resolving the MIA question was a low priority for the newly-installed National Security Council, or else the NSC did not believe that the Soviet document was an accurate or valuable source—or both. I certainly believe the second to have been the case. For the NSC had done what I had naively expected them not to do: called upon and accepted the expertise of the permanent bureaucracy—which had a record to protect—before making any other effort to pursue the matter in other ways.

On April 8 the head of the American side of the U.S./Russia Commission on POW/MIAs, Ambassador Malcolm Toon received his copy of the Soviet GRU document from the Soviet joint head, General Volkogonov. I arrived in Moscow to continue my academic research on April 9th. On April 10 the Russian daily newspaper *Izvestiya* published a report of the handover of documents, with extracts of key facts from the GRU document on American POWs. On the evening of April 11th, realizing that the leaking of the document in the U.S. could only be days away, I took a taxi to the *New York Times* bureau in Moscow,

[6]On March 18 the Director of Task Force Russia General Bernard Loeffke, and Mr Norm Cass of Ed Ross's office, were shown excerpts but not given a copy of the document in Moscow. They requested that a copy be provided to the Joint Commission at its next scheduled meeting on April 8.

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and gave a copy of the document to the journalist Celestine Bohlen. The next morning I flew back from Moscow to the United States, to do what I could to explain the document and its background to the American people.

The Bureaucracy and General Vessey

THE OFFICIAL defense department view of the Soviet GRU document (labeled by the DOD as the "1205 Document") was presented in the DOD *POW/MIA Newsletter* of July 1993. It is worth quoting the key passage summarizing their evaluation:

> The "1205 document" appears most credible in its first section, about political operations planned for South Vietnam. The report, however, also contains numerous errors and inconsistencies, particularly on the section on POWs. While portions of the document are plausible, evidence in support of its claims to be an accurate summary of the POW situation in 1972 are far outweighed by errors, omissions, and propaganda that detract from its credibility. As additional information becomes available, the Department of Defense and other U.S. government agencies will continue to assess the document. At this point our bottom line judgment is that the document and the information contained in it suggesting the Vietnamese held more than 600 POWs is not accurate.

What are the "errors, omissions and propaganda that detract from" the credibility of the Soviet GRU document? The DOD did not feel it worthwhile to cite any of them. Presumably the American people, including MIA family members, were expected to take the DOD's evaluation on trust. Somewhat bizarrely, the DOD evaluation is still officially "ongoing," in spite of conclusions being already reached. But let us examine what available written and verbal statements by DOD members, the public statements by General Vessey (apparently based upon briefings by DOD and State Department officials), and the State Department intelligence unit's report show us about how they evaluated the evidence.

On April 12, after publication of key extracts of the document in the *New York Times*, the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) special office on prisoners of war and missing in action, Robert Sheetz, wrote a memorandum to the acting deputy assistant secretary of defense for POW/MIA affairs, Ed Ross. The memorandum stated: "DIA believes that this document is referring to both U.S. POWs and to allied POWs, particularly ARVN commandos. The confusion probably lies in an inaccurate translation from Vietnamese to Russian."

Sheetz's analysis is preposterous. Anybody remotely familiar with published and secret Vietnamese Communist documents knows that Hanoi always distinguished allied from American troops, with the former described as "puppets." The use of such distinctive terms as "American" (*My* in Vietnamese, *amerikanyets* in Russian) and "puppet" (*nguy* in Vietnamese, *marionyetka* in Russian) is so frequent in communist writings as to make their confusion by any competent translator inconceivable. In an earlier report to the Vietnamese politburo dated June 26, 1972, Quang drew the distinction frequently. Clearly, his use of the term "1205 *amerikantsi*" in September could refer only to 1205 Americans.

For the month before the Russian document became public, and before the DIA had actually seen the document, this had been the DIA's and the DOD's unofficial interpretation. It continued to be such, through the medium of off-the-record press briefings, for another week, until my article in the *Washington Post* (April 18, 1993) noting Quang's earlier speech and its terminology.

On April 18, General John Vessey led a mission to Hanoi on behalf of President Clinton, to pursue the POW/MIA issue. The

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materials received by the Vessey mission—documents suddenly "discovered" by Hanoi officials after the revelation from Moscow—did not address the charges in the Russian document, because they do not discuss the fate of servicemen still unaccounted for. And because they are accounting records of the known prison system, the Vessey documents neither confirm nor falsify the Russian document's assertion of a separate prison system. Yet Vessey misled President Clinton by telling him that they challenged the Russian document.

More disturbing were Vessey's public statements. In Hanoi he said, "I have no reason to disbelieve" General Quang's denial that he had ever made the report contained in the Russian document. But what did Vessey expect Quang to say? After all, if the Russian document is accurate, General Quang is complicit in a huge crime. Even if General Vessey had possessed no means of judging General Quang's credibility, common sense should have suggested that any criminal suspect's mere denial of guilt is not sufficient ground for suggesting innocence. But Quang and his alleged accomplices do have a record by which we can evaluate his denial. He has been a senior figure in a regime which has slaughtered tens of thousands of its own citizens in peacetime as well as war. He has served a regime which for twenty years denied that it was controlling, supplying, and eventually directly participating in the war in South Vietnam. He has served a regime which for over ten years denied that it had military forces stationed in the independent nations of Laos and Cambodia. A candid listener might have accurately commented "I have no reason to believe" General Quang's denial—or, if prudence required it, remained silent.

Equally disturbing was General Vessey's attempts at textual analysis. Though this was not his assignment, he undertook the task anyway. His evident purpose was to show that the document was not accurate. Yet although he had had ten days to examine it before speaking publicly, he still managed to misrepresent its contents. On the day after his return from Hanoi, Vessey stated that the document claims that American prisoners were segregated according to their political views, which is inconsistent with what we know from returnees. Not so. The document suggests that Hanoi divided the prisoners up analytically, not physically.

Vessey stated that the document wrongly claims that prisoners were released according to their political views, when in fact release in 1973 was in accordance with date of capture. But Vessey is confused. Only the final *process* of release of those already selected was determined in accordance with date of capture, not the selection of who would be released. Moreover, since Vessey does not possess the Vietnamese list of who was in each category, how can he know whether or not the group of 591 finally released in 1973 did not include the 368 Hanoi deemed political "progressives"?

Vessey stated that the document claims that senior officers were segregated from others in the camps. But the document is highly ambiguous here. One passage might seem to be suggesting that. But the total number of senior officers Quang claims were held in four separate prisons is less than the total number of senior officers that he admits, elsewhere in the document, to be holding. Reading the whole document carefully, one could also conclude that 355 senior officers were segregated while others were mixed with lower ranks.

Next General Vessey points (correctly for once) to a claim by the document that after the Son Tay raid the prisoners were dispersed into several different camps. Not so, says Vessey; what happened after the Son Tay raid was that prisoners were concentrated in fewer camps, not dispersed. Yet the Pentagon's own evidence from returnees—contained in the DIA's report of the POW camp system, declassified by the Senate Select Committee last year—turns out to be neither

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of concentration nor of great dispersal.

Finally Vessey asserts that there could not have been 1,205 prisoners held because neither the returnees nor U.S. intelligence knew of a separate prison system. But if there was a separate prison system for non-returnees, why should the returnees have been expected to know of it? And why should U.S. intelligence on Vietnam in the 1970s be considered either omniscient or infallible? Recall that, in 1968, with half a million American lives at stake, U.S. intelligence failed to predict the Tet Offensive.

General Vessey is a dedicated public servant and a diplomat. But the qualities most necessary for solving the MIA problem are those of a criminal investigator and a judge. General Vessey's early public rush to judgment suggests that in this instance his preference was for the role of defense attorney for the suspects.

Vessey's misrepresentations of the document continued to be expressed by government bureaucrats, including DOD's Ed Ross, over subsequent weeks.[7] This is not surprising since Vessey had almost certainly based his presentation to the president and the public on briefing papers provided by bureaucrats, who included the DOD's Ed Ross, the State Department's Ken Quinn, and others. The lie that I acquired the Soviet GRU document by paying a large sum of money to a senior Russian archivist—a lie concocted by hard line conservative Russian archivists—was disseminated by Ross to MIA family members,[8] and by an anonymous "Pentagon source" to the journalist Nayan Chanda of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.[9]

The other major source of criticism of the Soviet GRU document comes from the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Its report dated April 29, 1993 is characterized by pretense bordering on fraud. It states at the beginning:

> The tone, the use of the first person, and even the content of the "Quang report" are out of character for a briefing report to an elite body, particularly the Politburo. It is much more like a pep talk than a report to the leadership. The closest comparable documents of the era were captured or acquired in South Vietnam. These policy directives and reports generally contained quite detailed discussion of the situation, strategy and tactics. A cursory review of those on hand reveals that, despite the rhetoric, they were more informative and frank about problems than the document in question.

This introductory passage suggests that the State Department has seen documents which are truly comparable with the Quang report—that is, top secret reports by a North Vietnamese general to the Hanoi politburo. After all, how else could they judge whether the tone, the use of the first person etc. are "out of character" or not? Yet a longtime Vietnam watcher in the CIA, George Carver, who served as the special assistant to the director of the CIA for Vietnamese Affairs in 1972-73, testifies that while working for the Agency he never saw a secret document of such sensitivity. The most sensitive documents captured by the U.S. government during the war were from the central office for South Vietnam (COSVN). This operational field command center for the North Vietnamese was several steps below the politburo. The only politburo or even central committee level

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[7]e.g. Ed Ross's speech to the Northeastern Regional conference of the National League of Families, Newport Rhode Island, April 30, 1993.

[8]At the Northeastern Regional conference of the National League of Families, at Newport Rhode Island, April 30, 1993.

[9]"Research and Destroy." *Far Eastern Economic Review*. May 6, 1993. My letter in response was savagely cut of some of the most damning criticisms of Chanda's unprofessional journalistic practices in reporting the story, and published in the *FEER*, July 15, 1993.

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documents acquired were officially *published* statements, not secret reports. Thus, without its explicit citation of a document of precisely this kind, the State Department's claim to have comparable documents with which to evaluate the GRU document appears to be phony.

The most distinctive overall feature of the State Department report is its one-sided determination to seek flaws in the Soviet document. There is no sign of any attempt to confirm the document's main claims. The reader is not told whether anything in the document is true. And there is no attempt to distinguish what is more important in the document from what is less important, so that the uninformed reader cannot evaluate the seriousness of the criticisms.

The report is further distinguished by its pettiness. Of the fourteen points of criticism in the report only five refer to purportedly blatant errors of fact (points 3, 4, 5, 8, 14). Whether they are actual errors of fact is questionable at least, and most of them are trivial relative to the issues under discussion. For example, Quang reported General Duong Van Minh's official status of ten years earlier as prime minister, when he was actually president. That was secondary background for the main point—the content of the political discussions with him. North Vietnamese, like Russian and American officials, often got minor details wrong. Quang's report was not a scholarly dissertation at a major American university. It was a report, undertaken during the difficult conditions of war, of the completion of tasks undertaken at the previous request of the Hanoi politburo.

This gives some of the flavor of the intellectual pettiness of the State Department evaluation. None of its claims of error, even if true, is serious enough for anyone to question the reliability of the document as a whole. None of them gives grounds for doubting that General Quang was reporting the actual policy of the Vietnamese communists: to conceal from the outside world, and hold back at the time of the signing of a peace agreement, hundreds of American prisoners of war.

Not every element of the U.S. government bureaucracy was so negative. Individuals within the information gathering division of the DIA took the document very seriously and continue to pursue related inquiries. The element most qualified to analyze Russian documents, and one which had no corporate reputation on the MIA question to defend—Task Force Russia, formed only a year ago—approached the document with an open-minded curiosity. They were convinced that the document was a valuable source and that its proper evaluation required more research in Russian archives.

But this was a minority view. And with the key posts related to this issue in the permanent bureaucracy occupied by the advocates of normalization *now* (e.g. Kenneth Quinn, the deputy assistant secretary for East Asia and the Pacific at State) and by resolute defenders of the Pentagon's record (Ed Ross), it seems destined to remain so.

The Media Reaction

THE ATTEMPT to discredit the document by the bureaucracy was given valuable assistance by major media outlets, through the active partisanship of several key journalists.

The *New York Times*, which together with the *Washington Times* broke the story of the document, began its coverage on April 12 with straight objective reporting by Celestine Bohlen in Moscow. This was followed on April 13 by a longer objective news story from Washington Bureau chief R.W. Apple. On the same day the *New York Times* also ran extensive excerpts of my English translation of parts of the document. But this was the end of the straight news reporting, by either the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post.*

On April 15 the *Washington Post*'s Thomas W. Lippman, the paper's Saigon bureau chief in 1972-73, served up the by

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now stale DIA/Robert Sheetz argument that the document was referring to South Vietnamese and Thais when it talked about Americans but used another source named Sedgwick D. Tourison, Jr. Lippman described Tourison as: (i) a former senior analyst in the DIA's POW-MIA office for five years; (ii) a former intelligence officer and prison interrogator in Vietnam and Laos; and (iii) a former investigator for the Senate Select Committee on POW-MIA Affairs. The crucial part of Tourison's resume which Lippman omitted was the fact that he had been fired by the chairman of the Senate Select Committee for telling *Newsday* reporter Sydney Schanberg that the MIA issue was a "hoax" perpetrated not by people with a plausible interest in doing so, but by "Hanoi's state security apparatus."[10] In other words, the source for Lippman's story was the purveyor of a conspiracy theory that lacks any rationality.

Lippman employed other methods of advocacy. On Sunday April 25 he authored an op-ed page article in the *Post* which attempted to discredit the GRU document by associating it with unrelated conspiratorial theories. With impressive insensitivity, he wrote: "Among the faithful who believe that live Americans are still held as prisoners of war in Vietnam, the recent disclosure of a document from Russian archives had the same uplifting effect that reports of weeping statues have on devotees of other creeds." On the same day he produced a news story which resorted to the attribution of motives by falsely portraying me as an interested party who believed that if the Quang report was phony then my entire scholarly research effort on other subjects would be called into question. In fact Lippman knew that I had other, less selfish, reasons for believing in the accuracy of the document, reasons that were on the public record.

Lippman's brand of advocacy journalism competed with that of a younger journalist from the *New York Times*. Steven Holmes had taken over the assignment on April 14, and immediately introduced a new method of framing the story. While critics of the document were described apolitically, in terms of their professional institutional affiliation, I was described as "a partisan who ardently opposes normalization with Vietnam." This was in fact false and Holmes was in a position to know that it was false, from my published writings which I cited during his taped interview with me before he wrote the story.[11]

In his April 16 story Holmes trotted out Lippman's dubious source, Sedgwick Tourison, again. Even more astonishing was his second source, H. Bruce Franklin, described as an English and American Studies professor at Rutgers University. Mr Franklin is in fact a Maoist literary critic, remembered by some as the Stanford professor fired from his tenured position at that very liberal university in 1972 for participating in acts of violence on the campus. Franklin is also the editor of a collection of writings of Joseph Stalin, in the introduction to which he expresses his moral and political admiration for the Soviet dictator. Holmes, while falsely identifying my political opinions, did not identify Franklin's extremist political ideology.

Franklin had been given legitimizing cover a year earlier by the *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1991) which had published an extract from his book on the MIAs, also without identifying his Maoist-Stalinist views. Franklin then rose to commentator status on television networks including CNN, where he was described simply as a "historian." Without even having read the document or knowing anything about its provenance, Franklin was able to declare to CNN viewers that it was a transparent forgery. The producers of CNN & Company, apparently delighted with these dialectical

[10]Sydney H. Schanberg "It's Operation Censor in Draft POW Report," *New York Newsday*, January 7, 1993.

[11]"The Great Red Hope", *Washington Post*, November 4, 1990.

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insights, decided to cancel my scheduled interview and retain the services of "historian" Franklin.

All of this advocacy journalism by key sections of the media had a political context. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Boston Globe* and others were contacted by political activists identified with Hanoi's political cause, who attempted to discredit the document by trying to discredit its discoverer. At the *New York Times* Steven Holmes was phoned by John McAuliff, a professional lobbyist for Hanoi who heads the U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project, and by Ben Kiernan, currently a Yale-based historian who for years headed a Pol Pot support group in Australia before switching to Hanoi's side in 1978. Other journalists were contacted by people of similar character. The standard line was that I had a political perspective critical of Vietnam and hence the document was not credible.

The pro-Hanoi left was assisted by an unlikely ally—Wellesley College economist and media publicist Marshall Goldman, who holds the administrative title of associate director of Harvard's Russian Research Center. When journalists telephoned Goldman to find background on who this Harvard researcher was, they were often given a damning denunciation of me. Goldman told journalists that I was untrustworthy and merely on an ego trip. Goldman's commentary was not based upon knowledge of my research, about which he knows little. Our previous relationship consisted mainly of his attempt to have me disaffiliated from the Russian Research Center, following my disinclination to respond to his earlier demand that I not seek research funds from foundations that he was approaching.

Two other journalists did not require political lobbying to reach the conclusion they arrived at. Neil Sheehan has emerged in recent years as one who holds a benign view of the Vietnamese Communist Party.[12] For his article in the May 24, 1993 the *New Yorker*, Sheehan chose to read the analysis of the document provided by the bureaucracy rather than read the document itself. Thus he honed in on the more trivial errors (the date of the 23rd plenum, the confusion of Truong Dinh Dzu with General Ngo Dzu) without any sense of their relative significance, and then casually dismissed the document. Relying upon government handouts to interpret events was something that Sheehan once rightly denounced as bad journalism when writing about the Vietnam War.

Undoubtedly the most egregious example of advocacy journalism in a competitive field was that of the deputy editor of the influential *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nayan Chanda. Like Sheehan, Chanda failed to read the document. As with Sheehan, Chanda's attempts to discredit its accuracy were based largely upon the State Department analysis of April 29, discussed above. Furthermore, Chanda was the only major journalist covering the story who made no attempt to either interview me or the only credible secondary witnesses—the American and Russian scholars also working in the Russian archives under the Wilson Center's project.

Moscow and the Clinton Administration

WITHIN DAYS of the publishing of information about the Soviet document in the American press, the Russian Security Service (RBS), successor to the KGB, descended upon the archive on Ilyinka Street. All foreign researchers were denied their previous access. The head of the archive, Rem Usikov, was fired on the trumped up charge of selling a top secret document to a foreign researcher. On June 4 the archive was physically closed for three months while an intensive investigation was undertaken by the security services. I was

[12]Neil Sheehan, *The Bright Shining Lie* (New York, 1988); *After the War Was Over* (New York, 1992).

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referred to by all archive officials in conversations with foreign visitors as "an agent of foreign special services."

I had never met or communicated directly or indirectly with Rem Usikov. Almost all of the thousands of documents provided to researchers were labeled either "secret" or "top secret." Why was the GRU report of 1972 different? Obviously not because of its secrecy, but rather because of the publicity it generated. Does this mean that the Russian security services didn't know that secret documents were being revealed by the archivists? Possibly. But it is also likely that the unreconstructed Soviet-minded operatives in the military and state security apparatuses were upset by the protest emanating from their former comrades in arms, the Vietnamese.

This interpretation is given some support by an event which happened at the same time. Radio Irina, the Russian-based Vietnamese émigré radio station which for one year had been broadcasting anti-Vietnamese government commentaries and news on the same frequency as Radio Moscow, was closed down in June after a protest from the Vietnamese embassy. But my revelation would not have led to the security services reaction had there been a counter-reaction from the U.S. embassy, thanking the Russian government for this important new piece of information.

There was, however, little chance of such a counter-reaction ever taking place. According to one member of the Joint U.S.-Russia Commission staff, the U.S. embassy in Moscow had long regarded the commission's quest for information about missing Americans as an obstacle to the main task of the embassy—securing the political base of Boris Yeltsin. Little wonder that prior to my revelation not a single document of substance pertaining to the fate of Americans missing in Vietnam has ever been provided to the commission. The Americans were sending mixed signals and the Russians weren't really looking. My discovery of the document was allowed to become an embarrassment to both sides.

The Clinton administration has failed to grasp the American domestic political implications as well as the foreign policy implications of finding out the truth about the Vietnam MIAs in Moscow. As I had argued to Sandy Berger on February 11, if President Clinton could resolve the MIA question with Russian help, it would eradicate once and for all the negative aura which still hangs over him as a result of his avoidance of military service in Vietnam. President Clinton would also secure enormous public support for his policy of economic aid to Russia, as a result of American public gratitude to Boris Yeltsin for his cooperation in this matter. But these arguments have apparently made no impact on administration thinking.

Nothing manifests the administration's lack of conceptual clarity more than the fact that when the document was released—an event made possible by the liberal policies of Boris Yeltsin—the only "thank you" publicly given to Yeltsin by a prominent American was given not by Bill Clinton, Tony Lake, Warren Christopher, or Les Aspin. It was given by Zbigniew Brzezinski.[13]

And this administration ignores the stated wishes of the American families of the MIAs. The family members and their leadership have indicated publicly and privately to the administration that they wish to have further research undertaken in the Russian archives on the MIA question, especially by this researcher.[14] But as with the families' request to the administration not to go ahead and grant IMF lending privileges to Vietnam until genuine cooperation from Vietnam is

[13] *The MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour*, April 13 1993.

[14] e.g. see Ann Mills Griffiths, Executive Director, National League of POW/MIA Families. Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. July 21, 1993.

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forthcoming, the families' request on the archives are met with stony silence.

The Clinton administration still clings to the hope that the Vietnamese government will solve this problem for the United States. But even if the Hanoi leaders were not guilty of the crime outlined in the Soviet GRU document, they would not provide the U.S. with the only proof that they could provide of their innocence—open access to the relevant party and military archives. This would be a violation of the ruling caste's most treasured *modus operandi*—the absolute inviolability of the party's secrets. And if the Quang report is fundamentally correct then Hanoi cannot come clean. They cannot admit that they have committed this massive crime, because the political consequences in their relations with the United States would be disastrous.

This logic has been ignored by an administration which persists in relying upon Hanoi's goodwill, rather than insisting upon Moscow's.

THE SOVIET GRU document on American prisoners of war being held in North Vietnam is the most important document on the subject which has ever been released to the American government and people.

Unfortunately some of those within the U.S. permanent bureaucracy who have been assigned the task of evaluating the document's accuracy, as well as the president's special emissary General John Vessey, have pursued their assignment with inappropriate prejudice. They have distorted what the document says, and the evidence relevant to evaluating the document. These distortions have been accepted uncritically, publicized as fact, and even embellished by those in the mass media who are unhappy with the political implications of the document. These distortions have hampered the U.S. administration's judgment of the accuracy of the document and hence the broader policy questions that must be addressed.

Vietnam today is a country of little strategic or economic significance to the United States. The only special product it has which is of value to the American people is a full accounting of the fate of America's missing in action. This it will not provide.

The wishes of the MIA families can be accommodated easily. It would take only a telephone call from President Clinton to President Yeltsin, to open the Russian presidential archives on Vietnam—a small price to exact for billions of dollars in Western aid. If the Russian archives are ignored, it is because President Clinton, and those lobbying him, have kissed the boys goodbye. □

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A Mandate for Israel

Douglas J. Feith

HAS A CONFLICT evolved into peace when fighting between the opposing armies has ceased? In one sense, yes; but a cease-fire, or even a formal armistice, falls short of true peace. Should the description "true peace" be reserved until the antagonists have signed treaties requiring exchanges of ambassadors and other visible signs of "normal" relations? Perhaps, but again the essence of peace is not paper. Neither is it embassies, business deals or tourism. Vicious wars—including World Wars I and II—have erupted between countries actively engaged with each other in diplomacy, trade and cultural exchanges.

True peace, as opposed to a mere cease-fire or a balance of power, is bound up with concepts of justice—that is, law and morality. It describes, for example, relations now between the United States and Canada, but not relations during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. It has to do with attitudes of mind—with a mutual belief that each state has sovereign rights and a shared conviction that no party should take what belongs to another. The ultimate success of the current Arab-Israeli negotiations, therefore, will hinge on how they deal with the legal and moral essence of the conflict: the longstanding Arab legal and moral arguments used to oppose Zionism and Israel.

As a result of the recently revealed Israel-PLO negotiations in Norway, there are high expectations for Israeli peace agreements with (respectively) the Palestinian Arabs, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. The Soviet Bloc's demise and the Desert Storm coalition's action against Iraq laid the foundation for the new diplomacy. Though not the first negotiations between the parties, the current talks are the first that have been open (that is, not conducted secretly) and direct, and that purport to seek a final settlement. U.S. officials attribute much importance to these new elements. They are said to signify that the Arab parties want peace with Israel, are willing to conclude peace treaties, and intend to abide by them.

It is devoutly to be wished that this reading is correct. But, while negotiations have on occasion ended conflicts, they have also sometimes served as the continuation of war by other means. Has the Arab-Israeli conflict truly changed from an existential quarrel not susceptible to diplomatic resolution into a simpler, non-philosophical dispute over subjects like boundary lines, water rights and security arrangements—or not? Have the relevant Arab powers transcended their ideological objections to Zionism and permanently resigned themselves to deal with Israel as a legitimate state? Or is there a calculation at work that negotiating, at a time when other

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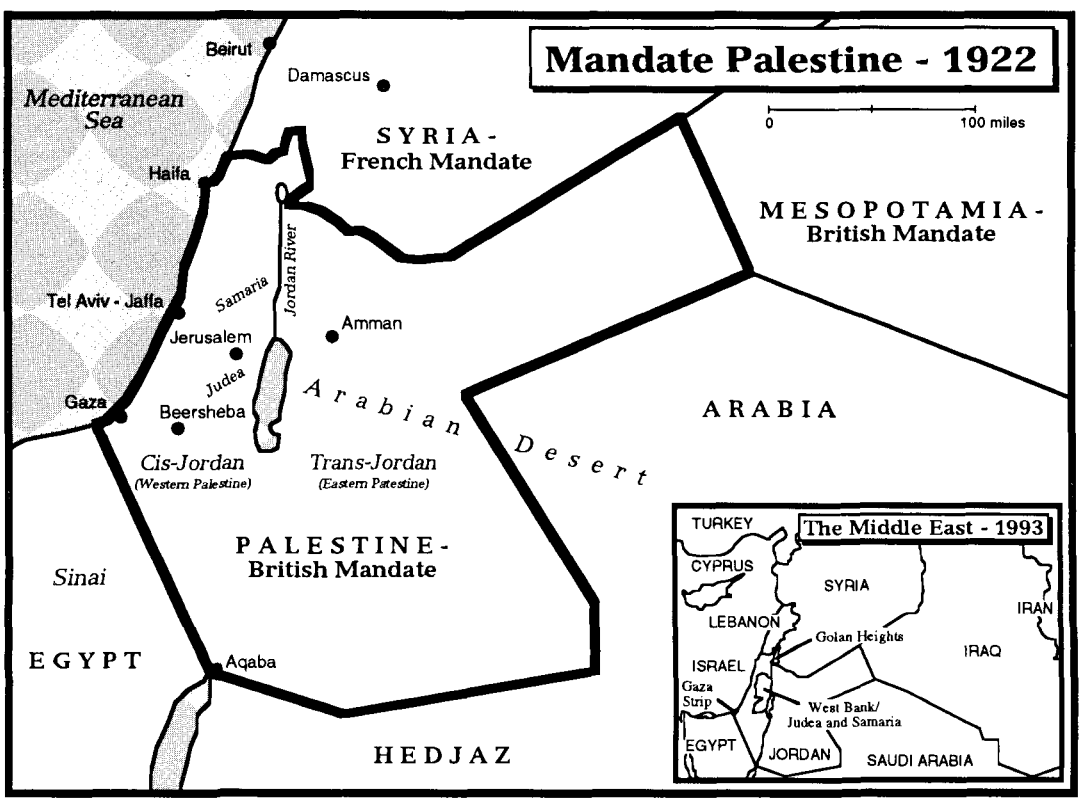
good options are lacking, is the only realistic means of getting from Israel territorial concessions that may be exploitable in the future?

Statesmen and states beg such questions at their peril. The American "full partner" in the Madrid Process needs the capability to gauge the parties' actual intentions and evaluate the legitimacy of their claims, requests and actions. This requires, if the job is taken seriously, a plunge into the conflict's political and legal history.

LATE IN 1917, Allied forces under British General Edmund Allenby fought hard in their advance on Jerusalem through the hilly region of central Palestine designated on their maps as "Judea." On December 9, they reached the goal. The city's surrender ended a period of Turkish dominion of precisely 400 years, one which had begun with the Ottoman Empire's conquest of Palestine from the Mamluks in the year 1517. Immediately after the war, British officers at the headquarters of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force published an account of the Ottomans' retreat from Jerusalem:

> On this same day 2,082 years before, another race of conquerors...were looking their last on the city which they could not hold, and inasmuch as the liberation of Jerusalem in 1917 will probably ameliorate the lot of the Jews more than that of any other community in Palestine, it was fitting that [it] should have coincided with the national festival of the Hanukah, which commemorates the recapture of the Temple from the heathen Seleucids by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C.

The Bible-reading British were conscious of Palestine's ancient history. David Lloyd George, Britain's wartime prime minister, said that as a result of his childhood religious instruction he was more familiar with the



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place names figuring in Allenby's reports from Palestine than those in the military dispatches from Europe. The British associated Palestine with the Bible and with the Jews. These associations inspired the Balfour Declaration, which led to the Palestine Mandate, which created the legal framework within which (and against which) Jews and Arabs have conducted diplomacy and war from 1920 to the present day. Though one can listen for years without hearing a U.S. official even mention the Mandate, the fact remains that nothing rigorous can be said about the rights or duties of the parties to the Palestine conflict without reference to that fundamental document.

Towards the Balfour Declaration

THE GOVERNMENT that sent Allenby into Palestine was well briefed on Jewish settlement activities there. These had burgeoned with the influx of Jews who fled Russia following the pogroms of the early 1880s. The founding of new Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine, however, began even earlier, in the 1870s. Diplomacy to facilitate the restoration of Jews to Zion had been attempted by Jewish leaders and British officials as far back as the 1830s. Even before that, the yearning of Jews for their homeland evoked sympathy and fired imaginations among British statesmen and people of letters. Lord Byron's "Hebrew Melodies," published in 1815, lamented:

> Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
> How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
> The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
> Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

Byron's era saw a blossoming of hope in Europe that enlightenment, political liberalism and social assimilation would provide a happy answer to the so-called Jewish Question. A century later, however, in the early 1900s, antisemitism was intensifying, not disappearing, throughout Europe. Eminent academic, ecclesiastical, cultural, and social figures wrote books and gave speeches justifying not only hostility toward the Jews, but legal disabilities and even violence. And their words were heeded. Mobs attacked Jews, often fatally, and Jewish property was destroyed. Especially disillusioning was that these outrages occurred not only in the politically primitive empire of Czarist Russia, but in advanced societies such as France and Germany. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees fled from the more antisemitic countries to relatively hospitable lands, especially the United States and Britain. Some became Zionist pioneers in Palestine.

The Zionist movement, formally organized by Theodor Herzl in 1897, argued that the Jewish problem necessitated a state for the Jews in their ancient homeland, the Land of Israel being the one place where a Jew could deal with the nations of the world as a host and not a perpetual and often unwelcome guest. Zionist theorists reasoned that such a state would provide the Jewish people with a refuge and a dignified existence. The gentile powers should welcome it for taking unwanted Jews off their hands. Also, to the extent that it would normalize the status and raise the moral stature of all Jews, even those remaining in the Diaspora, every country with a Jewish population would gain from its existence. Finally, the Zionists envisioned that a Jewish state in Palestine would benefit the Arabs, there and in the surrounding territory, because it would bring to these technologically undeveloped, politically repressed and economically poor people the benefits of Western science, the opportunity to share in the fruits of Jewish commerce and capital, and an example—and perhaps a model—of national liberation and self-determination.

For nearly a hundred years before World War I, Palestine received innumerable visitors from abroad, especially from Britain. Nearly all, it seems, wrote books, and these testified in unison to the land's desolation,

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sparse population, and poverty. When the Zionist settlers arrived, they farmed and developed Palestine far more productively than the Arabs had, exceeding common expectations of what was possible. But, it was widely believed that Palestine's neglect over the centuries had ruined the land permanently, precluding substantial population increases. This led some important men in Britain to dismiss Zionism as an unrealistic cause.

Nonetheless, certain British political leaders, including Arthur Balfour, David Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill, developed enthusiasm for Zionism. All three of those men became acquainted with political Zionism during the movement's infancy. In 1902, Balfour, then prime minister, grappled with the consequences of Russian pogroms and Jewish statelessness as Parliament debated immigration legislation, a debate Herzl entered personally through his testimony before a Royal Commission. While in Britain, Herzl initiated talks with His Majesty's Government on what became a series of proposals for a Jewish refuge within the British Empire—respectively, in Cyprus, the Sinai, and Uganda. In those discussions, Lloyd George served as the Zionists' lawyer. Responding to a question on these talks, Churchill, as under-secretary for the Colonial Office in 1906, endorsed Jewish aspirations: "I recognise the supreme attraction to a scattered & persecuted people of a safe & settled home under the flag of tolerance & freedom." In the view of such men, the Jewish nationalist cause combined morality, justice, economic practicability, and strategic advantage for Britain. This conviction gained intensity after the Great War put Britain and the Ottoman Empire on opposite sides, and especially after Lloyd George became prime minister late in 1916.

During the Great War, British officials were impressed by the contributions of leading Zionists to the Allied war effort, contributions that included Chaim Weizmann's scientific breakthrough in aid of British munitions production; the efforts of Joseph Trumpledor and Vladimir Jabotinsky to organize Jewish military units; and the Aaronsohn family's valuable espionage work in Palestine. As intelligence developed by the Zionists was molding Allenby's strategy for an inland thrust through Beersheba to Jerusalem, the Arabs of Palestine were fighting for the enemy and evincing no support for Britain's vision of an Arab nationalist revolt against the Turks. The British War Cabinet appreciated that support for the Zionists could serve its interests against the Ottoman Empire in the war, and against French imperial ambitions after the war. Moreover, the British government in 1917 believed the Allies urgently required the political support of the reputedly influential Jewish communities in the United States and in Russia. The Americans had entered the conflict only in April of that year, and with considerable misgivings. Meanwhile the Russians, stunned by the overthrow of the Czar in the February revolution, appeared about to drop out. All of this gave impetus to the Zionists' proposal that Britain formally declare support for their cause, an idea rendered pressing by Britain's fear that Germany might issue a pro-Zionist declaration first.

Thus, what the British foreign minister described as "sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations" combined with pragmatic, strategic considerations to bring about the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917:

> His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

The vision underlying the Declaration was that Palestine would be the land in which the Jewish people could exercise self-determination, while the Arab people, who had at the time no independent states of their own,

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would be given generous opportunities to exercise self-determination in the vast territories that Britain and her Allies were liberating from the Ottoman Empire in Syria, Lebanon, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. This explains the distinction, reflected in the Declaration, between civil and religious rights on the one hand and political rights on the other. While protecting everyone's civil and religious rights, the Declaration made no reference to any collective political rights for Palestine's non-Jewish communities.

The term "national home" as opposed to "state" or "commonwealth" appeared in the original (July 1917) Zionist Organization draft of the Declaration. It echoed the venerated First Zionist Congress (1897), convened by Herzl: "The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law." Though Herzl's intention to create a Jewish state was a matter of record, a resolution in favor of a "home" was deemed less likely to antagonize the Ottoman rulers of Palestine. Similarly, the Zionists during World War I knew that a flexible neologism like "national home" would be more palatable to the British government than a precise term like "state."

British officials did not want to commit themselves to a state if the Zionists proved unable to attract enough Jews to Palestine to govern by majority rule. The promulgators of the Balfour Declaration made it clear, however, that they intended the Zionists to establish a Jewish state or commonwealth in Palestine if Jewish immigration there were ample and economically successful. According to the minutes of the War Cabinet meeting that considered the Declaration:

> As to the meaning of the words 'national home,' to which the Zionists attach so much importance, [Balfour] understood it to mean some form of British, American, or other protectorate, under which full facilities would be given to the Jews to work out their own salvation and to build up, by means of education, agriculture, and industry, a real centre of national culture and focus of national life. It did not necessarily involve the *early* establishment of an independent Jewish State, which was a matter for gradual development in accordance with the ordinary laws of political evolution [emphasis added].

In testimony before the 1937 Palestine Royal Commission, Lloyd George stated:

> There could be no doubt as to what the cabinet then had in their minds. It was not their idea that a Jewish State should be set up immediately by the peace treaty...On the other hand, it was contemplated that, when the time arrived for according representative institutions to Palestine, if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them...and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish commonwealth.
>
> The notion that Jewish immigration would have to be artificially restricted in order to ensure that the Jews should be a permanent minority never entered into the head of anyone engaged in framing the policy. That would have been regarded as unjust and as a fraud on the people to whom we were appealing.

When the Balfour Declaration spoke of "Palestine," to what territory was it referring? This question has no simple answer because Palestine had never been the name of any country. It was a region within the Ottoman Empire, but was not an administrative unit. The 1911 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in its entry on "Palestine," said that "the limit of this territory cannot be laid down on the map as a definite line." It added: "The River Jordan, it is true, marks a line of delimitation between Western and Eastern Palestine; but it is practically impossible to say where [Eastern Palestine] ends and the Arabian desert begins." It was standard in the geographical literature of the period to employ the terms "Western Palestine" and "Eastern Palestine," the latter referring to what was later called

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Trans-Jordan and is now the Kingdom of Jordan.[1]

Of what relevance is the Balfour Declaration today? It is not, after all, a legal instrument. When issued, it was merely a statement of British government policy. But it achieved the status of international law through the Palestine Mandate.

The Palestine Mandate

THE MANDATE system was a legal innovation of the Versailles Peace Conference. Its proponents, led by President Wilson, intended to do away with the ancient practice of victors asserting ownership over conquered foreign lands. The victorious Allies of World War I agreed, at Wilson's insistence, to limit their own authority with respect to such lands. This limitation was embodied in Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant, which says that territorial conquests should be administered by states acting not as owners, but as trustees under mandates, supervised by the League, which would form "sacred trust[s] of civilization."

On this foundation, the Allies created the Palestine Mandate.

When World War I ended, the Arab world (a term that then referred only to lands east of Egypt) was mostly under British control. This included Palestine, on both sides of the Jordan River, Mesopotamia (that is, present-day Iraq) and much of the Arabian peninsula. France controlled Syria and Lebanon. Sovereignty remained with the Ottoman Empire, however, pending conclusion of a peace treaty.

The Allies met in San Remo, Italy in April 1920 to draft the peace treaty they wished to impose on Turkey. There they agreed that France would receive the mandate to administer Syria (including Lebanon), while Britain would receive two mandates, one for Mesopotamia and one for Palestine.

The preamble of the Palestine Mandate begins as follows:

> [T]he Principal Allied Powers have agreed, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, to entrust to a Mandatory selected by the said Powers the administration of the territory of Palestine, which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire....

Note that the creator of the trust—the settlor or grantor, in legal parlance—is not the League of Nations, but the Principal Allied Powers. And it is those Powers, and not the League, which selected Britain to serve as Mandatory (i.e., trustee).

The second clause of the preamble reads:

> [T]he Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country....

Hence, the Mandate explicitly adopted the Balfour Declaration and quoted its essence in full. In other words, what the Mandate mandated was implementation of Britain's pro-Zionist wartime pledge. When presenting the Mandate

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[1]Jews called Palestine "Eretz Yisrael," meaning the Land of Israel. Local Arabs commonly referred to the region as Southern Syria as a means of reinforcing their demands for a single unified Arab state following the defeat of the Ottomans. In his 1938 classic history, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement*, George Antonius, himself a Palestinian Arab, observed: "In the Arab view, Palestine was an Arab territory forming an integral part of Syria and, as such, was bound to remain in the area of Arab independence."

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to the League of Nations, the British representative, Balfour, declared:

> Remember that a mandate is a self-imposed limitation by the conquerors on the sovereignty which they obtained over conquered territories. It is imposed by the Allied and Associated Powers on themselves in the interests of what they conceived to be the general welfare of mankind....[T]he League of Nations is not the author of the policy, but its instrument....
>
> Now, it is clear from this statement, that both those who hope and those who fear that what, I believe, has been called the Balfour Declaration is going to suffer substantial modifications, are in error. The fears are not justified; the hopes are not justified....The general lines of policy stand and must stand.

The third clause of the preamble is especially significant:

> [R]ecognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country...

Here the drafters highlight, as the grounds or source of the Jewish people's rights in Palestine, "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine." The Mandate contains no granting clause by which the Allies or the League say they are giving the Jews a right to a state or homeland in Palestine. Instead the Mandate recognizes pre-existing Jewish rights, rights that flow from Jewish history. The drafters pointedly used the word "reconstituting" to describe the building of the Jewish national home in Palestine. As we have seen, the British government stressed that the Allies obtained certain rights based on conquest, but it did not assert that the Jewish people's rights in Palestine derived from those of the Allies.

Traditional international law would have supported the Allies' right, as victors, to dispose of Palestine as they saw fit. It is noteworthy, however, that Britain and the League took pains to ensure that their "legislative" decision in favor of the Jewish national home was associated harmoniously with the Jews' claims of historical ties to the Land of Israel. They wanted to make clear that the new positive law on Palestine had a definite moral and historical foundation. In this era of Wilsonian idealism, there were those who believed that Zionism legitimated the British administration of Palestine more than the other way around. As Elizabeth Monroe, a British historian with little sympathy for Zionism, put it: "the British climbed on the the shoulders of the Zionists in order to get a British Palestine." Moreover, British officials believed that the practical success of the Jewish national home policy hinged on the Jews' confidence that their rights in Palestine were not a gift from anyone. The British government's 1922 White Paper on Palestine made this point:

> [I]n order that [Palestine's Jewish] community should have the best prospect of free development and provide a full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance. That is the reason why it is necessary that the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and that it should be formally recognised to rest upon ancient historic connection.

The first articles of the Mandate state that Britain is to use its full administrative powers in Palestine to "plac[e] the country under such...conditions as will secure the establishment of a Jewish national home," to encourage "local autonomy" and to recognize the Zionist Organization as the Jewish agency to serve as interlocutor with the Mandatory Administration on matters "as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine." There is no provision for the creation of an Arab agency for Palestine, which

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reflects the original conception that the Arabs would set up their state or states elsewhere, making Arab administrative bodies in Palestine unnecessary.

Article 6 says:

> The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish agency, close settlement by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes.

Facilitating Jewish immigration and encouraging "close settlement by Jews on the land" are set forth as the administration's express duties, thereby recognizing the corresponding rights of the Jews in their national home. "Under suitable conditions," the phrase qualifying the former duty, was originally understood as a reference to the land's so-called economic absorptive capacity.

The Mandate does not use the words "Arab" or "Arabs," though Article 22, as a means of protecting the civic rights of all the communities, does state that English, Arabic, and Hebrew shall be official languages in the territory.

Which brings us to Article 25—the focus of a great controversy. But before parsing it, we must return to our chronology.

Churchill's Intervention

IN THE MONTHS following the April 1920 San Remo Conference, at which the Middle Eastern mandates were drafted, Britain faced difficult problems in the region. First among these was: How to cut the cost of its postwar military deployments there? Second was: How to protect its various, delicate diplomatic and legal arrangements with France—strained as a result of Anglo-French differences in Europe as well as the Middle East—from further damage at the hands of Britain's Arab clients, the Hashemite family, who were asserting claims to French mandate territory in Syria.

The Hashemites, descendants of the Prophet Mohammed and the guardians of the Moslem Holy Cities, Mecca and Medina, had declared their region of western Arabia, known as the Hedjaz, an independent kingdom in 1916. Britain granted recognition. The king's sons, Feisal and Abdullah, led the small Arab force that fought the Turks in World War I alongside the brilliant, if bizarre, British Colonel T.E. Lawrence ("of Arabia"). On the basis of some exquisitely indefinite British wartime promises, the Hashemites believed themselves entitled to a new kingdom comprising most of the Middle East. To win his own state, the Hashemite Emir Feisal was willing to welcome the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

In January 1919, Feisal, acting on behalf of the Arab Kingdom of the Hedjaz, entered into a formal written agreement with Chaim Weizmann, leader of the Zionist Organization. The Arab side pledged to support all necessary measures for implementing the Balfour Declaration and "to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil." In return, the Jewish side pledged to support "the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State," in harmony with the aspirations of the Arab national movement, and to provide Zionist "experts" to help the Arab state develop its economy. Feisal conditioned the agreement on the prompt establishment of an independent Arab state reaching from Turkey to the Indian Ocean.

Alas, this early land-for-peace deal with the Arab leader came to naught. The notables from around the Arab world who gathered in Damascus after the war were willing to accept Feisal's leadership, but not an accommodation with the Zionists. Furthermore, in the sum-

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mer of 1920, French forces expelled Feisal from Syria, thus aborting the Kingdom of Syria and negating Feisal's agreement with the Zionists. The French held Britain responsible for keeping its Arab friends out of French hair in the future. The opportunity to rule a vast Arab kingdom from Damascus had induced Feisal to pledge peace with a Jewish Palestinian state. But the pledge proved anathema to his constituents, the moment passed, and the offer, once off the table, disappeared beyond retrieval.

It became the job of Winston Churchill, recently appointed colonial secretary, to find a way out of Britain's Middle Eastern dilemmas. Early in 1921, Churchill developed a plan. The key was to transfer to Arab powers the responsibility for maintaining order in the vast, undeveloped and generally inhospitable territories of Mesopotamia and Eastern Palestine. He aimed to satisfy the Hashemites by having Feisal elected king in Mesopotamia and allowing Feisal's brother, the less well-regarded Abdullah, to try his hand as ruling Emir of Eastern Palestine. Thus came into being both the Hashemite Kingdom of Iraq, which lasted until the revolution of 1958, and the Hashemite Emirate of Trans-Jordan, which in 1946 gained independence as the Kingdom of Trans-Jordan.

Churchill's inclination to put Eastern Palestine under Arab administration—to lop off around 80 percent of the territory originally available for the Jewish national home—caused consternation among the Jews. It moved Chaim Weizmann to write Churchill that a Jewish national home confined to Western Palestine was altogether inadequate:

> The economic progress of Cis-Jordania [that is, Western Palestine] itself is dependent upon the development of these Trans-Jordanian plains, for they form the natural granary of all Palestine and without them Palestine can never become a self-sustaining economic unit and a real National Home.... It is fully realized that His Majesty's Government must consider their pledges to the Arab people and the means of satisfying their legitimate aspirations. But the taking from Palestine of a few thousand square miles, scarcely inhabited and long derelict would be scant satisfaction to Arab Nationalism while it would go far to frustrate the entire policy of His Majesty's Government regarding the Jewish National Home.

Meanwhile, representatives of the leading Arab families of Palestine sent Churchill a memorandum of their own. Though they rejected the notion that the Arabs of Palestine are a nationality different from that of the Arab people in general, they organized themselves politically to fit within the "imperialist" boundaries they hoped to erase. Hence, it was in the name of the Palestinian Arab Congress that they wrote to Churchill declaring the Balfour Declaration invalid, stating that "Palestine belongs legally to the Arabs" and contending not only that the Jews have no rights in the land, but that they have no rights at all as a national group: "[T]hey have no separate political or lingual existence." The Arab leaders creatively used the phenomenon of antisemitism as an argument *against* Zionism:

> If Russia and Poland, with their spacious countries, were unable to tolerate them, how could Europe expect Palestine to welcome them...[W]ill the Jew, on coming to Palestine, change his skin and lose all those qualities which have hitherto made him an object of dislike to the nations?

The memorandum invoked the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as evidence of Jewish "pernicious motives." Finally, it denied that Palestine is a distinct national homeland and insisted on independence for a single national entity for the Arabs: "[T]he Arabs are convinced that this unnatural partitioning of their lands must one day disap-

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pear....Palestine should not be separated from her sister States."[2]

Notwithstanding the pleas of his various correspondents, Churchill met with Abdullah in Jerusalem and, without the participation of the Zionists, the two men struck a deal by which Eastern Palestine was, at least temporarily, closed to Jewish settlement, excluded from the Mandate's Jewish national home provisions, and put under an administration to be headed by Abdullah, subject to supervision by the British High Commissioner for Palestine. Churchill took pains to clarify that his government was "constituting Trans-Jordania an Arab province of Palestine." In return, Abdullah pledged to keep his hands off French Syria and to support the Mandate, which meant suppressing anti-Zionist activity: another land-for-peace deal that failed to produce peace.

The agreement with Abdullah raised legal problems because Trans-Jordan is in Palestine. The Mandate required, in Palestine, the encouragement of "close settlement by Jews" and the establishment of a Jewish national home. Churchill recognized that Trans-Jordan could not legally be transformed into an Arab emirate closed to the Jews unless the Mandate were amended. His staff urged him to finesse the problem by asserting that the necessary authority inhered in the famous Balfour Declaration proviso about protecting the "civil and religious rights" of the non-Jewish communities. But Churchill rejected the ploy and insisted on a formal amendment. Thus, in the Spring of 1921, came into being Article 25 of the Palestine Mandate, which declares:

> In the territories lying between the Jordan [River] and the eastern boundary of Palestine...the Mandatory shall be entitled, with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations, to postpone or withhold application of such provisions of this mandate as he may consider inapplicable to the existing local conditions ....

Article 25 emphasizes that the Palestine Mandate extends both west and east of the Jordan River: "in the territories lying between the Jordan and the eastern boundary of Palestine." Its purpose was to allow Britain to "postpone or withhold" the Mandate's Jewish national home provisions with respect to Eastern Palestine. In his autobiography, Sir Alec Kirkbride, a British military officer and diplomat who played a central role in the history of Trans-Jordan, reported sardonically on the creation of Article 25: "In due course the remarkable discovery was made that the clauses of the mandate relating to the establishment of a National Home for the Jews had never been intended to apply to mandated territory east of the river."

In the aftermath of the Great War, in

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[2]Demonstrating the long-term consistency of the Arab case against Zionism, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the political heir of the Palestinian Arab Congress, restated in its 1964 National Charter all these arguments from the 1921 memorandum to Churchill, minus only the most extreme anti-Jewish rhetoric and the reference to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Hamas, the "fundamentalist" Moslem Brotherhood organization now rivaling the PLO for leadership among the Palestinian Arabs, produced a charter document in 1988 that likewise echoes comprehensively this 1921 memorandum of the Palestinian Arab Congress, complete with citation to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. In this context, it bears noting that Feisal Husseini, reputed a "moderate" within the PLO and now a leader of the Palestinian Arab delegation to the negotiations with Israel, stated to a journalist in 1992:

> We have not relinquished and we will never relinquish any of the commitments which have existed for over 70 years....Within our Palestinian and Arab society we have the ability to deal with the divided Israeli society, which is characterized by its paranoia. Sooner or later, we will force the Israeli society to cooperate with the larger society—that is, our Arab society—and ultimately this will lead to the dissolution of the 'Zionist' entity in phases.

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Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, borders were being drawn or redrawn, states created or dismantled and territories transferred from one state to another—all, naturally, to the advantage of the victorious Allies and their friends and the disadvantage of the defeated powers and theirs. From the victors' viewpoint, the Arab people were set to benefit from the Allied triumph far beyond their contribution to it. As for the Arabs of Palestine in particular, their complaints lacked weight relative to the claims of the Zionists. They rang hollow also in absolute terms, given that the Palestinian Arab community (as opposed to the Hashemite forces) fought against Britain. In his *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, Lloyd George commented:

> No race has done better out of the fidelity with which the Allies redeemed their promises to the oppressed races than the Arabs. Owing to the tremendous sacrifices of the Allied Nations, and more particularly of Britain and her Empire, the Arabs have already won independence in Iraq, Arabia, Syria, and Trans-Jordania, although most of the Arab races fought [for Turkey]....The Palestinian Arabs fought for Turkish rule.

When, in 1922, the final amended draft of the Palestine Mandate came before the League Council, Balfour said very much the same thing, concluding: "[T]hat we should be charged...with having taken a mean advantage of the course of international negotiations [with the Arabs], seems to me not only unjust to the policy of this country, but almost fantastic in its extravagance." Even before Britain had decided to shrink the Jewish national home, Balfour, speaking of the entire Mandate territory on both sides of the Jordan, expressed the hope that the Arabs "will not grudge that small notch...in what are now Arab territories being given to the [Jewish] people who for all these hundreds of years have been separated from it." Though nearly 80 percent of that "small notch" was soon made off limits to the Jews, the Arab powers continued to "grudge" a Jewish state in Palestine.

The League Council confirmed the Mandate in July 1922. It then approved a British resolution that listed all the mandate provisions mentioning Jews and the Jewish national home and declared them "not applicable to the territory known as Trans-Jordan." The resolution stated that the administration of Trans-Jordan would be under the general supervision of the Palestine Mandatory. From this point forward, British officials sharpened the distinction between their separate administrations in Western Palestine and Trans-Jordan (both under the Palestine Mandate) by referring to the latter only as Trans-Jordan, not as Eastern Palestine. It became the practice to refer to Western Palestine simply as Palestine. Trans-Jordan remained under the Palestine Mandate until 1946, when, as noted, it achieved independence. As a matter of geographical fact, it has never ceased to be Eastern Palestine. In 1949, after Trans-Jordan conquered the territory it dubbed "the West Bank," the country changed its name to Jordan. It is now governed by King Hussein, grandson of the Emir (later King) Abdullah.

Law, History, and Current Diplomacy

AMERICAN policymakers show a powerful disinclination to enter into the kind of legal and historical issues raised here. They dismiss them as academic—disconnected from the practical realities of war and diplomacy. Yet these same policymakers attribute enormous value to negotiations and peace agreements. The inconsistency can be dangerous.

One can say that international law is cant, lacking real world significance. History does offer some support for that proposition. But one can hardly then contend that peace agreements are important. They are, after all, but a sub-species of international law. To devalue international law—to treat it non-rigorously or not at all, to reject the relevance of old laws, mandates, agreements, and the like—is to foreshadow the lack of respect that will be shown to the treaties now under negotiation, if they materialize at all.

The fact is that international law, including

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arms control agreements and peace treaties, has often proven impotent. Violators have often escaped not only sanctions, but even criticism. Solemn pledges to guarantee treaty compliance have been shirked on numerous occasions. Political leaders around the world show much greater interest in the conclusion of new treaties than in compliance with those already on the books. Perhaps this reflects the immutable nature of international affairs. In that case, however, it cannot be assumed, for example, that an effort by Syria's President Assad to recover militarily valuable territory from Israel in return for a peace treaty necessarily has anything to do with true peace.

International law, of which the Mandate is a part, specifically validates Jewish claims in Palestine and recognizes those claims as arising from "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine." Arab opponents of Zionism have, from the beginning, opposed this view.

The legal case against Israel's legitimacy is built on two major arguments. The first is that Arab "natural rights," rooted in the Arabs' majority status in the land in recent centuries, superseded any Jewish historical rights and precluded Britain, the League of Nations, or anyone else from lawfully establishing a Jewish state (or "national home") on this "Arab" land. This natural rights concept is promoted nowadays at the United Nations by means of resolutions that refer pointedly to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as "occupied Arab territories" instead of simply "occupied territories."

The issue of whether history or nature provides the Jews or the Arabs the better case for controlling Palestine raises fascinating metaphysical questions. As a matter of law, however, it was mooted by the fact that the international community, acting through the League, legislated in the Mandate in favor of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The international community, furthermore, has, in a series of UN Security Council resolutions over decades, consistently reaffirmed Israel's rights as a sovereign state and the general obligation to respect those rights and live with the Jewish State peaceably and without threats. The Arab natural rights argument says that the Palestine Mandate was unfair, impolitic, and impractical. It asserts, in effect, that the Allies legislated unwisely on Palestine. But even if that were true, it would not mean that the Allies had no legal right to legislate as they did.

It bears reiterating that traditional international law would have supported Palestine's annexation by the powers that conquered it from the Ottomans. The Great War Allies, however, chose to eschew rights of subjugation and annexation. One can contend that the Allies or the League made a bad decision in creating the Palestine Mandate. And one can regret that traditional international law gave victors rights over conquered territories. But one cannot accurately say that the Allies and the League violated international law by acting to dispose of Palestine (in Balfour's words) "in the interests of what they conceived to be the general welfare of mankind."

UNLIKE THE natural rights argument, the second major Arab argument against Israel's legal validity is made from within the established framework of international law. It posits that the Mandate violated the League of Nations Covenant because the Jewish national home policy was inconsistent with Article 22 of the Covenant and especially with the principle of self-determination as enunciated in that article. Article 22 states, however, that each mandate "must differ" according to the circumstances of the beneficiary people and that the terms of certain mandates may be defined on a case-by-case basis. The promulgators of Article 22 applied these provisions to Palestine by effectively designating the Jewish people as a whole as a principal beneficiary of the trust and focusing that mandate on the establishment of a Jewish national home. The same powers that drew up Article 22 drew up the Palestine Mandate, the general outlines of which were developed before Article 22. The Balfour Declaration, after all, antedated the League Covenant. Given the sequence of

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events, it is not credible to argue that the Mandate's drafters unlawfully transgressed the concepts, plans, and flexible authority that these very same parties built into Article 22 a *few months before.*

The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), created in 1947 to propose a solution to the Palestine problem, addressed the Arabs' self-determination argument. It highlighted that self-determination, though a principle of international law, is not necessarily a right:

> With regard to the principle of self-determination, although international recognition was extended to this principle at the end of the First World War and it was adhered to with regard to the other Arab territories [i.e., Syria and Mesopotamia], at the time of the creation of the [Middle Eastern] Mandates, it was not applied to Palestine, obviously because of the intention to make possible the creation of the Jewish National Home there...
>
> There would seem to be no grounds for questioning the validity of the Mandate for the reason advanced by the Arab States. The terms of the Mandate for Palestine, formulated by the Supreme Council of the Principal Allied Powers as a part of the settlement of the First World War, were subsequently approved and confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations.

The Mandate secured Jewish rights to a homeland and to "close settlement" in Palestine. In doing so, it distinguished between Eastern and Western Palestine, but it did not distinguish between the region of Judea and Samaria[3] and the rest of Western Palestine. No event and no armistice or other international agreement has terminated the Mandate-recognized rights of the Jewish people, including settlement rights, in those portions of the Mandate territory that have not yet come under the sovereignty of any state.

Those rights did not expire upon the demise of the League of Nations, the creation of the United Nations, or the UN General Assembly's adoption of the 1947 UNSCOP partition plan for Western Palestine. Article 80 of the UN Charter expressly preserves such "rights of peoples" as existed under League mandates. UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of November 1947, *which endorsed the* UNSCOP plan, never won the Security Council endorsement necessary to render it a legally binding action. Nor was the plan ever implemented. The position of the U.S. State Department on the legal status of Resolution 181 appears in a Near East Bureau memorandum dated January 27, 1948: "The growing tendency to refer to the *recommendation* of the General Assembly as a *decision* which *must* be carried out must not be allowed to divert our attention from the fact that the action of the General Assembly was only a *recommendation*"[emphasis in original]. Never having achieved the status of law or even

[3]It is now common for journalists to refer to the terms Judea and Samaria as the "biblical names" of this territory. The implication is that the neutral, geographical, non-politicized terminology is "West Bank" and the other terms are used only to propound a biblical case for Jewish rights in Palestine. From ancient times through the Palestine Mandate period until 1949, however, the names Judea and Samaria were the only names in use. Arab, British, and American scholars, journalists and government officials all called the region Judea and Samaria. See, e.g., Philip K. Hitti, *History of Syria: Including Lebanon and Palestine* (1951) p.38; Ronald Storrs, *The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs* (1937) p.301; John Bagot Glubb, *Syria Lebanon Jordan* (1967) p.12; James G. MacDonald, *My Mission in Israel* (1951) p.40. Samaria was one of the six administrative districts of the British Mandatory government. The United Nations Special Committee for Palestine, in its famous Partition Plan for Western Palestine, which the UN General Assembly approved in November 1947, referred to the region as "the hill country of Samaria and Judea." "West Bank" came into use only after Transjordanian forces seized the territory in the 1948-49 war they launched against the newly declared State of Israel and after King Abdullah decided to annex it.

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a reality on the ground, Resolution 181 cannot be deemed to have invalidated legal rights expressly recognized in the Palestine Mandate.

The acquisition of duly recognized sovereignty over Judea and Samaria by Jordan or Israel could perhaps have superseded any prior collective rights, including the right of the Jewish people to "close settlement" there. Since May 1948, however, neither the United States nor the international community has recognized any state as sovereign in Judea and Samaria. Each of the armistice agreements Israel signed with its neighbors in 1949 provided (at the insistence of the Arab parties) that neither party renounces any rights it may have regarding territories on the other side of the armistice lines. The agreement between Israel and Jordan, for example, states that the armistice lines "are agreed upon by the Parties without prejudice to future territorial settlements or boundary lines or to claims of either Party relating thereto." Furthermore, in 1988, the Kingdom of Jordan officially severed its legal and administrative ties to Judea and Samaria.

Eugene V. Rostow, who as undersecretary of state during the Johnson administration helped draft UN Security Council Resolution 242, has written that Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip constitute portions of the Palestine Mandate trust territory that have not yet been allocated to a sovereign. Rostow, a former dean of Yale Law School, concludes that the Mandate remains in force for those regions, just as the corpus of an ordinary trust remains trust property until it is lawfully disbursed or allocated, notwithstanding the trustee's death, resignation or removal. It is not necessary, however, to decide whether the Mandate and all its institutions remain in full effect for these territories in order to conclude that, since Britain's resignation as Mandatory, no event has legally terminated or superseded the right of Jews to settle there, as derived from the "historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine" recognized in the Mandate.

Contrary to the refrain of various United Nations resolutions, the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention does not render Jewish settlement in these territories unlawful. First of all, the Convention, by its own terms, may not apply at all to Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, for that land is not (and since 1949 has never been) "the territory of a High Contracting Party" within the meaning of Article 2, which delimits the Convention's applicability. Egypt administered the Gaza Strip as occupied territory, under a military governor, from 1948 forward and never annexed or incorporated it into the Egyptian state. And, as noted, Jordan's purported annexation of Judea and Samaria, effectively renounced by Jordan itself in 1988, did not win international recognition. It can also be argued that Article 49 of the Convention, which provides that an occupying power "shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies," is not applicable to the case at hand. The Convention's official Commentary makes clear that Article 49 was drafted with reference to the massive, forcible population transfers effected by Nazi Germany during World War II. Some legal authorities have concluded that it does not apply to Israeli settlement activity in the territories, which is voluntary and has entailed no substantial displacement of the local Arab population.

Even if one assumes Article 49's applicability to Israel's authority as military occupant, however, the Jewish people do not thereby lose their Mandate-recognized rights in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. If the Fourth Geneva Convention applies, Israel is constrained solely in its capacity as an occupying power. The Convention does not address or affect the rights or authority of the Jewish people in their capacity as beneficiaries of the Mandate. In other words, Jewish rights there do not derive from Israel's capture of the territories in 1967. So any limitations imposed by the laws of war on Israel with respect to the military occupation of the territories cannot negate those independent, pre-existing rights.

Five months after the Arab-Israeli "six day war" of June 1967, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242, which states general principles on which "a just and lasting peace in the Middle East" should be established. Though

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frequently misread as requiring Israel's relinquishment of all the land lost by Arab states in the 1967 war, it in fact leaves the issue of territorial rights open for resolution by agreement among the parties. It does not call for anyone's relinquishment of any territorial rights before the conclusion of peace. Moreover, by stressing the importance of security, highlighting the right of all states to live "within secure and recognized boundaries" and refraining from calling for withdrawal from *all* the newly acquired territories, Resolution 242 envisions that peace talks will produce borders different from the 1949 armistice lines. If the Security Council had intended that Israel withdraw its forces to a definite line, it could have said so. Thus, pending the peace contemplated in Resolution 242, the Jewish people retain whatever rights of "close settlement" or territorial claims belonged to them before the Resolution. And after any such peace, the rights of all parties will be as set forth in the negotiated legal instruments.

It must be emphasized that the issue of Jewish rights of "close settlement" throughout Western Palestine is a completely different matter from whether Israel should trade those rights for something else, such as a peace treaty. The point here is simply that the argument that the Jews have no legal right to settle in Samaria and Judea tends inevitably, even if unintentionally, to undermine the Jewish people's right to sovereignty in pre-1967 Israel, for all such rights flow from the same source—the Palestine Mandate recognizing the Jewish people's historical connection with Palestine.

The Real Issue

RECOGNITION OF Jewish claims does not require denial that the Arabs have claims there too. Even the more militant Zionist leaders, like Vladimir Jabotinsky, acknowledged that the Arabs have claims that must be balanced against those of the Jews. In 1937, as the Nazi campaign against the Jews intensified, Jabotinsky told the Palestine Royal Commission:

> [W]hen we hear the Arab claim confronted with the Jewish claim; I fully understand that any minority would prefer to be a majority, it is quite understandable that the Arabs of Palestine would also prefer Palestine to be the Arab State No. 4, No. 5, or No. 6—that I quite understand; but when the Arab claim is confronted with our Jewish demand to be saved, it is like the claims of appetite versus the claims of starvation. No tribunal has ever had the luck of trying a case where all the justice was on the side of one Party and the other Party had no case whatsoever.

Arab opponents of Zionism have opposed any such balancing of claims. They have rejected Zionism, the Balfour Declaration, the Palestine Mandate, and the State of Israel as a matter of principle, not because they thought the Jews should get a little less land and the Arabs a little more.

Western statesmen have failed to do justice to the intensity and ideological steadfastness of the anti-Zionist cause when they thought they could buy the Arabs off with territorial concessions that leave a Jewish state in the picture. Recall that Britain's original land-for-peace concept was that the Arab people would get Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Arabia and the Jews would get Palestine. Then, under the Churchill plan, Arabs received almost 80 percent of Palestine in return for consenting to a Jewish national home in the 20 percent west of the Jordan River. During the 1930s and 1940s, Arab leaders were offered a series of plans for the partition of Western Palestine. They unanimously rejected all of them, even those leaving only a few slivers of land under Jewish control. The Arabs insisted that Palestine belongs to them, Zionism is illegitimate and the issue is one of principle. Western policymakers persisted in assuming that such hostile statements were insincere, a device for obtaining a better deal.

Having for years disbelieved the pledges of eternal hostility to Zionism, many of our policymakers were quick to accept at face value the post-Gulf-War decision of various Arab leaders to negotiate peace. Under the

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circumstances, a student of history must at least raise the question whether this decision to negotiate represents an actual change of heart or merely a means of retrieving land and gaining advantage for future assaults. History, after all, knows of cases where parties talked peace without intending peace.

Underlying the current negotiations is the notion that the essence of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the amount of territory controlled by the Jewish state. There are better grounds for believing, however, that the conflict's essence, as Arab spokesmen have asserted since World War I, is the issue of legitimacy: Do the Jewish people have a right to a state anywhere in Palestine? If the parties to the current negotiations are divided on this issue, their diplomacy is likely to prove as fruitless as most of the Palestine-related diplomacy throughout history. If the Arab parties have truly abandoned the conviction that the Arabs alone have national rights in Palestine, as Anwar Sadat certified for Egypt, then diplomacy may accomplish something constructive.

It came to be conventional wisdom in recent years that the key to resolving the Palestine conflict is satisfaction of the Palestinian Arabs' unfulfilled national aspirations. But there are problems with this view. First of all, the conflict antedates the claim that the Palestinian Arabs are a national group as such. As we saw, the Palestinian Arab leadership expressly disclaimed that status, and did so until quite recently. Secondly, there exists a sovereign Arab state already in Eastern Palestine. Even if one credits the idea that the Arabs of Palestine are a distinct people entitled to self-determination as such, it is a stretch to conclude that the Arabs of Western Palestine are an ethnically, religiously, culturally, or linguistically distinct people entitled, on the principle of self-determination, to their own state.

Perhaps more important, however, are the practical objections to focussing on the purported statelessness of the Palestinian Arabs. Western Palestine is small. The distance from the Sea to the Jordan River is around 45 to 50 miles; from Lebanon to Eilat is less than 300 miles. The practical difficulties of satisfying within this tiny strip of land both the national aspirations of all the Arabs there and Israel's need to safeguard its physical security and national rights have long proven insurmountable. This may be because they are insurmountable.

It is obvious why an antagonist of Israel would want to assert that the Arabs of Palestine are stateless. The effect is to put Israel on the moral defensive and damage its standing. But if one aims to promote peace, it is constructive, perhaps indispensable, to acknowledge that there are already two states in Mandate Palestine, one Arab (Jordan) and one Jewish (Israel). Though there does not seem to be enough land in Western Palestine to satisfy the requirements of both the Jews and the Arabs, there should be enough if all of Mandate Palestine is taken into account and if the relevant Arab powers are willing to live with Israel in peace.

True peace will not result automatically from peace treaties. New treaties, if complied with long enough, may help stimulate the rethinking in the Arab world necessary to lay to rest the issue of Israel's legitimacy. That is the essential condition of true peace, the kind that exists without reference to any military balance. In the meantime, however, with or without new treaties, the region's peace will continue to depend on Israel's ability to defeat any military opponents. The value of a new treaty will depend on whether it effectively fosters acceptance of Israel's sovereign rights—helps bring about a pacific change of heart among the traditional opponents of Zionism—and whether it preserves for Israel the military assets that will deter war pending this hoped-for change of heart. If it does, it will deserve the title "peace treaty." If not, it will join the long list of international agreements that have done more harm than good. □

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The Politics of Human Suffering

James C. Ingram

LESS THAN A year ago, United States marines landed on the beaches of Mogadishu to the acclaim of its citizens. They did so at the beginning of "Operation Restore Hope," authorized by the United Nations Security Council "to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for international humanitarian relief operations in Somalia." Within six months, television screens contained disconcerting images of American Cobra helicopter gun-ships inflicting civilian casualties as they fired on targets in Mogadishu and of angry Somalis denouncing United Nations forces as an army of occupation. A little more than a year ago, in June 1992, the deployment of United Nations troops to protect Sarajevo airport in order to allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies was hailed. By the following summer, the nightly news programs showed an anguished Moslem population in Sarajevo deprived of water and electric power, and nearly empty United Nations relief supply warehouses. Early in 1991, the successful use of the armed forces of the United States and its allies in support of Kurds fleeing from the Iraqi army captured the imagination of the world community. But that Security Council-authorized operation has not been complemented by a similar concern for the welfare of other Iraqi civilians affected by the war and continuing sanctions.

Security Council Resolution 688, insisting on access by humanitarian organizations "in all parts of Iraq," was regarded as something of a breakthrough by some international lawyers, adding substance to the idea of a "right of humanitarian intervention." By this is meant the right of states to deliver assistance forcibly to people deprived of the necessities of life or otherwise abused by their governments. Security Council decisions on Bosnia and Somalia, particularly Somalia Resolution 794, were seen as significant further steps in the *de facto* establishment of the legitimacy of such interventions. Now, the seeming debacles in Bosnia and Somalia have raised doubts about the workability of the new approach to humanitarian intervention.

So far, more attention has been paid to peacekeeping than to the most appropriate humanitarian arrangements for minimizing loss of life and life-threatening suffering in situations of civil conflict. This oversight is curious. It was concern for the suffering and death of civilians that led directly to armed intervention in Somalia and gradually deeper involvement in Bosnia. In Iraq, Bosnia, and Somalia the United Nations, through its various humanitarian and other agencies has been a major provider of relief

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assistance. It has also coordinated the entire international relief effort, involving the work of many private voluntary agencies, or non-government organizations (NGOs), as they are more usually called. It was the failure of the United Nations to perform these roles satisfactorily that was a major reason why the use of armed troops became necessary in Somalia.

There will be many more occasions when the Security Council is faced with humanitarian crises where action on its part is inescapable. The question arises whether humanitarian goals may not be better achieved under a new and different regime. I believe they would. The United Nations should confine its role to political functions associated with the resolution of disputes, the prevention of conflict and coercive interventions to end it. Reaching and succoring the victims of conflict and coordinating the relief efforts of the international community should cease to be a United Nations responsibility.

Principles of Humanitarian Action

THERE IS NO agreed definition of the meaning of "humanitarian" in international law, or in the Security Council Sanctions Committee, or among non-government organizations. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has defined humanitarian action as: "action to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it is found," that "makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, class, religious beliefs, or political opinions." In relieving suffering ICRC is guided solely by the "needs of individuals." In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross movement "may not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature."

It is appropriate for the United Nations to be selective about its political and security interventions. Neither the interests of states nor the likely availability of financial and other resources would allow any other course. A genuinely humanitarian organization like the ICRC, however, cannot be selective about which innocent people in life-threatening situations it will help. All must be eligible, the only practical limitation being set by the availability of money, organizational capability, and manpower.

Maximizing the relief of suffering requires access to all affected people. This may well be best brought about by gaining the consent of the parties to a conflict rather than through forcible intervention. In my experience, the indispensable condition for gaining the consent of the parties is for the negotiator to be seen to be "working impartially and with strictly humanitarian motives" (UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182), that is to say being concerned, and concerned only, to prevent civilian loss of life and life-threatening suffering.

When the United Nations first sought to bring about a cease-fire in Mogadishu during the early months of 1992, the basic concern of the official entrusted with negotiations was to use food aid as an inducement to the parties. Because his goal was political and not humanitarian, he gave no serious attention to the extraordinarily complex and urgent problem of getting food to civilian victims under the conditions prevailing. The succession of United Nations failures in Somalia began from that first mistaken judgment, an unwillingness to recognize that bringing about cease-fires and achieving access of relief supplies to victims are driven by different imperatives and practical constraints.

This is a very important point to be clear about. While successful humanitarian action may sometimes promote negotiated conflict resolution, in most UN interventions the two functions of providing humanitarian relief and resolving conflict are mixed up. The structure that is emerging in complex emergencies, such as those in Somalia and Mozambique, is for the secretary-general's representative to be in overall charge, with a

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representative of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs in charge of relief coordination and a military officer responsible for peace keeping. The under secretary-general for humanitarian affairs is at the same time answerable to the secretary-general.

This linkage of the incompatible security and humanitarian roles of the United Nations is precisely the problem in Bosnia, Iraq, and Somalia. In Somalia, at the moment of writing, the United Nations is not distributing relief food in south Mogadishu—that is, to the area where General Aideed's forces are located—because of the security situation. Relief agencies are complaining that they are unable to work in other areas requiring armed escorts because the United Nations forces are preoccupied with the intense security problems they face in Mogadishu.

The use of force against General Aideed has meant that the United Nations, including its relief agencies, has ceased to be seen to be neutral in the eyes of Somalis. It is equally true that if United Nations forces had intervened in Bosnia in a serious way against one of the parties, even to secure the delivery of relief, it would have ceased to be seen as impartial. Hence the emphasis always placed when bringing in relief under the protection of UN forces on doing so with the consent of the parties. The denial or provision of food in a conflict situation has tactical and even strategic implications for the parties to the conflict. They either consent to its delivery, or, if force is to be used to get it through, the user of force becomes a party to the conflict.

In February 1992 the secretary-general of the United Nations over-ruled the UN high commissioner for refugees (UNHCR), Ms. Sadako Ogata, when she suspended most relief shipments in Bosnia in the face of the belligerents' failure to allow access to desperate civilians. Ms. Ogata justified her decision on the grounds that the political leaders on all sides had made a mockery of United Nations efforts. Suspension of its efforts by the ICRC is not unknown, in the face of rampant violations of law and humanity in which continuance of activities would bring into question the organization's fundamental integrity. In overruling Ogata, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, reportedly said, "I'm supposed to direct this operation." The incident demonstrates once again that in the last resort United Nations humanitarian agencies are subject to political direction.

The UNHCR is seen by some non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights as inconsistent in the application of humanitarian principles, in effect too "political" in its decision-making. This is particularly so in its dealings with major donors, as in its alleged failure to uphold the rights of refugees from El Salvador in the United States, and of the several hundred thousand Cambodian "non-refugees" who took refuge inside the Thai border. There was also disagreement between UNHCR and the ICRC about the most appropriate course of action in relation to the creation of "safety zones" for vulnerable ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia.[1] The UNHCR has not favored evacuation of civilians from zones of conflict, on the grounds that such steps could contribute to the consolidation of "ethnic cleansing"—that is, a politically grounded decision, justified on the basis that efforts should concentrate first on bringing safety to people, rather than people to safety. The ICRC, on the other hand, maintains that this consideration must be secondary to the purely humanitarian consideration of how best to relieve suffering.

The necessity for separating political and humanitarian action was clearly spelled out by the president of the ICRC in an address to the General Assembly of the United Nations last December. The ICRC is convinced, he said, that "humanitarian endeavour and political action must go their

[1]Kathleen Newland, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees," *Survival* (Spring 1993), p. 98.

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separate ways if the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian work is not to be jeopardised." He went on to state the ICRC's belief that, "it is dangerous to link humanitarian activities aimed at meeting the needs of victims of a conflict with political measures designed to *bring about the settlement* of the dispute between the parties" [italics in original].

The president of the highly respected private organization *Medecins Sans Frontieres* recently pointed out that, in situations of armed conflict, aid workers have only one option, namely, "to attempt to build a relationship of trust with the local strongmen." He went on to say, "I am convinced that only private organizations are in a position to build up and maintain this relationship. In other words, our strength in wartime lies in the fact that our motives are so obviously disinterested. You can see evidence of this in Somalia, where we worked under fire for eighteen months without protection. Today, however, the military intervention has disrupted relations between non-government organizations and the local people so much that operating without protection has become unthinkable."

Bosnia and Somalia are showing that exercise by the United Nations of a "right of humanitarian intervention" through use of armed forces is not a panacea for the unqualified achievement of humanitarian goals. Only where practically and politically there is no alternative, should force be used to achieve humanitarian goals.

Flawed Structures

ALTHOUGH THE international community has been concerned about the organization of humanitarian relief for well over a century, neither under the League of Nations nor when establishing the United Nations was serious consideration given to establishing a permanent and comprehensive relief capability.

The post-World War II United Nations relief system evolved from a structure created for different purposes. With the exception of UNHCR and UNICEF (United Nations Childrens Fund), the other main agencies now involved in emergencies—i.e., WFP (World Food Program), UNDP (United Nations Development Program), FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), and WHO (World Health Organization)—acquired that task as a secondary function. Their principal role was the promotion of economic and social development. Emergencies were incidental to their work until the 1980s, as they were for UNICEF, which long before had switched to "development" as its main focus. Then, notwithstanding the upsurge in their humanitarian relief work, the organization of the agencies underwent no fundamental change. Staff recruited for intellectually challenging "development" work were disdainful of relief. Intergovernmental committees overseeing their work invariably focused on activities in support of development.

This reflected the fact that the officials concerned were drawn mainly from develop-

Acronyms

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
NGO	non-government organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Childrens Fund
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

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ment assistance agencies or technical departments of government, like agriculture. As a rule their understanding of, or interest in, humanitarian assistance was low. The development culture of the United Nations agencies, geared essentially to projects undertaken in the public sectors of developing countries, meant that there was little interaction with NGOs working at the local level, often on disaster related activities. Meanwhile, the extraordinary growth in the number of voluntary aid agencies working in developing countries added to the overall pattern of a chaotic, unprofessional international response to successive humanitarian crises.

The system of governance of the United Nations system very much compounded the problem. The agencies of the United Nations system are linked in the loosest way with the United Nations proper. In the principal coordinating body of the system, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), the United Nations secretary-general is *primus inter pares*. The operational programs like UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, and WFP, though legally less independent, in practice work with much the same autonomy as the specialized agencies. All have separate intergovernmental managing councils. This very loose system of governance grew out of the view that international cooperation was best built around the nations working together in areas of mutual *functional* interest: food and agriculture, education, telecommunications, health, civil aviation and so on. Humanitarian relief was not seen as such a function. There was also fear that if the functional agencies were not kept separate from the United Nations, political division in the latter would spill over into the former.

Separate agencies are inevitably in competition for scarce funds and want to be seen to be making a major contribution to a problem exercising donor governments—that is, in recent years, any headline catching major humanitarian disaster. This competition—as well as the conflicts between, and gaps in, mandates of agencies—prevents the kind of swift and purposeful action required to come to grips with complex, rapidly evolving humanitarian emergencies due to armed conflict, or sudden natural disasters such as regularly afflict Bangladesh. The secretary-general does not have the authority to adjudicate these conflicts. To the extent they are resolved, settlement emerges from what is essentially a bargaining process. The governing bodies share with the secretariats of the agencies concerned an interest in their continuing autonomy and prosperity. Accordingly, General Assembly resolutions calling for the pursuit of appropriate coordination policies by the various governing bodies are rarely seriously addressed or followed up over time. In the field, that is at the point of humanitarian intervention, the system of independent agency representation means that much critical time is spent on attempts at coordination. The result is that decisive action is invariably too slow.

A further serious inhibition to effective United Nations coordination in the field, is the United Nations doctrine, deriving ultimately from the concept of national sovereignty, that coordination of humanitarian effort is the responsibility of the government of the affected country. Since quite often the government is unable to discharge the task (human disasters occur most often in poor countries with weak and inefficient governments), a lot of effort often has to go into establishing institutional structures that give the appearance of government cooperation, and in negotiation with government on many aspects of implementation.

Unless the secretary-general has a strong, "charismatic" personality and a good sense of the practical problems of emergency management, he is not really able to give coherent leadership to the multiplicity of agencies claiming a role in the United Nations emergency response system. No matter how gifted, a single person cannot oversee effectively the whole system, or even the United Nations proper and the programs linked to it. Inevitably and properly,

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the secretary-general has to give most of his attention to diplomatic issues.

Moreover, merit and general suitability are less significant than political connections in determining who is appointed to senior United Nations posts. Most appointees tend to be diplomats, and posts are frequently filled in response to political pressures from national governments, especially the major powers. Diplomatic skills are essential attributes for top-level United Nations appointees, but diplomats are renowned neither for their management skills nor their sense of what is feasible or practical by way of action in response to concrete situations such as natural or man-made disasters.

An effective emergency response requires capacity for expeditious decision making, flexibility and improvisation as well as a capacity for quick organization and planning. None of these qualities is particularly characteristic of national civil services. Yet, not only have United Nations relief agencies been set up and staffed on civil service lines, and therefore share their characteristics, but for reasons connected with their multinational/multicultural composition they are much more rule-bound and inflexible than most civil services.

United Nations agencies are sometimes criticized for being desk-bound and generally ineffectual in coping with emergencies. Their performance, and what is seen as their often premature withdrawal from dangerous posts, is contrasted unfavorably with non-government organization performance. This criticism is misplaced. The professional staff of United Nations agencies have been recruited to and accepted employment in an international civil service equivalent to a national foreign service. They are not "hands on" volunteers such as the employees of non-government organizations recruited for disaster work. In practice, many career United Nations officials are ready to accept extremes of discomfort and danger that are not expected of diplomats from national foreign services.

A fundamental problem in securing a more cohesive and efficient international humanitarian response is the donor government practice of allocating most of their emergency resources bilaterally, usually through non-government organizations. The lobbying power of NGOs is formidable when emergencies have become the focus of media attention. Governments respond by channeling resources through them. While key NGOs may sometimes be more efficient than United Nations agencies, the practical effect is that in almost all disaster situations a large number of non-government organizations are involved on the ground. For example, 140 different international NGOs are listed as operational in Mozambique alone. NGOs have conflicting aims and agendas, and often insist on working in particular regions of affected countries. The task of harmonizing the total effort, which falls to the United Nations, is far from easy. Very often the representatives of donor embassies insist on being involved. While their efforts can sometimes be helpful, more often than not they make the coordination problem even more difficult to solve.

In terms of volume and value, food and its transport are usually the preponderant part of the cost of emergency humanitarian responses. So much of the justified criticisms of too scanty or excessive food aid, and its untimely delivery in emergencies, is due, first, to donor insistence on independent decision-making and, second, to their slowness in giving data on their decisions and actions to the coordinator. The situation in Somalia in October 1992 illustrated dramatically how dangerous the effects of individual donor decision-making can be. Not only was the port of Mogadishu clogged with unscheduled ships (a routine occurrence in any major famine, no matter how much warning lead-time has been given to donors) but some donors were shipping commodities such as dates, wheat flour, rice, and sugar that were highly prized on the black market. Their relatively

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high value inevitably led to intervention and theft by armed looters.

The provision of the kind of data sought by donor aid ministries leads to centralization of coordination at United Nations headquarters, whereas an effective United Nations intervention requires leadership at the country level, by a person experienced in disaster management but having the kind of personality able to persuade the parties involved to work together under his broad direction. The country coordinator needs considerable autonomy and cannot discharge his task efficiently if subject to a burdensome reporting requirement to headquarters—reporting which, in turn, inevitably leads to undue intervention from the center. At best, the consequence is to slow down decision-making; in the worst cases, something approaching paralysis can result.

Measures to Improve UN Performance

THE INSTITUTIONAL structure of the United Nations that has grown up and which deals *inter alia* with disasters is inherently cumbersome and ponderous in action. Without root and branch changes in structure, which so far governments have shown little willingness to tackle seriously, marginal improvements at best may realistically be expected.

Creating an effective United Nations disaster response mechanism has been a vexing problem for many years. Twenty years ago the General Assembly set in place a comprehensive framework or "architecture" for the organization of the United Nations humanitarian response. However, the system introduced made little real difference to the generally haphazard way in which the United Nations disaster agencies went about their business. Over the years, donor governments and the principal NGOs concerned with humanitarian aid had become increasingly critical of the United Nations' overall performance in emergencies. The United Nations' perceived shortcomings in 1991 in relation to the Kurds and a catastrophic cyclone in Bangladesh gave every appearance of being the last straw.

The stage therefore seemed to be set for real advance. The General Assembly debated the issue at length that year. After intense negotiations, a comprehensive resolution, 46/182, was adopted in December 1991. The new arrangements, however, were deeply flawed and only peripheral problems were addressed.

Every important element embodied in the resolution passed twenty years earlier (2816 (XXVI)) found its place in Resolution 46/182, though there were, of course, differences in detail and emphasis. Thus Resolution 2816 (XXVI) called upon the secretary-general to appoint a disaster relief coordinator at the under secretary-general level to report directly to him. Resolution 46/182 called for a "high level" official to be appointed as emergency relief coordinator and having "direct access" to the secretary-general. As it happened, the actual appointee is also at the under secretary-general level. However, the new resolution does place great weight on the leadership role of the secretary general, which is rightly said to be "critical." In the earlier resolution this had been more implicit. Putting the responsibility fairly and squarely on the secretary-general is critical because of the structure of the United Nations system, in which, as already noted, even the secretary-general is only *primus inter pares*. Some of the heads of specialized agencies (and programs) do not readily accept leadership from United Nations officials they do not regard as peers.

On the other hand, on paper 2816 (XXVI) gave the disaster relief coordinator clear-cut power. He was authorized on behalf of the secretary-general "to mobilize, direct and coordinate the relief activities of the various organizations of the United Nations system," though in practice he was never able to do so. In Resolution 46/182 the powers of the new senior official are

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rather fuzzy. He is to "process" requests for assistance, to "systematically pool and analyze early warning information," to "organize" joint inter-agency needs assessment missions, to "serve as a central focal point" with governments and inter governmental and non-government organizations, to provide "consolidated information" to interested governments, to "actively promote" the smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, and to prepare an "annual report" for the secretary-general. The most substantive tasks he is given include "coordinating and facilitating" (but not managing or directing) the United Nations emergency response; "managing" a central emergency revolving fund; and, as noted above, "actively facilitating" access by humanitarian organizations to people in need.

In short, we have a situation extending over a period of twenty years during which governments have been dissatisfied with the coordination system that they have established but at the same time are unable to agree on anything significantly different. The problems of efficient United Nations disaster management are much more deeply rooted than can be addressed by further detailed changes. They go back to the way in which the United Nations system has been constructed and how in practice it functions.

An Alternative Relief Regime

IF THE HUMANITARIAN goal of saving lives and reducing suffering in situations of armed conflict is best assured by keeping distinct the function of peacekeeping, in all its guises, from humanitarian action; and if, as well, the United Nations structure for humanitarian relief is irredeemably flawed, as I have argued—then the conclusion is inescapable: the time has come for the United Nations to vacate the humanitarian relief field. A thoroughly professional humanitarian agency, which itself plays a significant front-line relief role and has the authority, standing, and competence to be acceptable as coordinator of the international relief effort, is required.

The International Committee of the Red Cross is the obvious body on which to build. Indeed, in some situations it virtually plays the leading role already, and with considerable success. The bravery and competence of ICRC staff are beyond reproach and justifiably have aroused great admiration. On the other hand, the multiplying of conflict situations has imposed strains on the organization.

The ICRC is not an international organization but remains a private, independent Swiss institution subject to Swiss law. Its governing bodies are composed of Swiss nationals. Given Switzerland's neutrality policy and the fact that it is not a member of the United Nations, its Swiss character has brought many advantages. On the other hand, my own experience has convinced me that the multicultural, multinational composition of United Nations organizations does promote a great sensitivity to the values and concerns of other nations and cultures. In WFP's dealings with governments involved in conflict, we sometimes found suspicion of the ICRC as an arrogant European organization lacking appreciation of the aspirations and concerns of developing countries. Given the concern of developing countries about infringement of sovereignty, an *internationalized* ICRC would almost certainly enjoy more confidence from developing countries and therefore be more effective in negotiating access to all victims of internal conflict.

Internationalization of the ICRC in a way that avoids the defects of United Nations organizations ought to be feasible. A possible model could be the international agricultural research organizations grouped within the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Minimal changes in line with that model would be for membership of the supreme governing body of twenty-five members, i.e. the Committee, to be co-

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opted world-wide by the existing Committee of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement among outstanding persons known for their international experience and devotion to humanitarian values. The president could continue to be elected by the Committee. However, the pool of nationalities from which delegates are chosen would need to be progressively widened.

In the event an internationalized ICRC decided that a humanitarian crisis could no longer be satisfactorily managed by the family of humanitarian organizations it could so advise the secretary-general of the United Nations in a formal report. The secretary-general in turn could inform the Security Council. Taking account of that report and other relevant criteria the Council would decide what action, if any, should be taken including the most appropriate form of intervention. Under such an arrangement, the developing countries could be reasonably assured that if the Security Council decided to authorize the use of force, then the humanitarian argument would not be an excuse to disguise political or other motives. In situations akin to that covered by Resolution 688, action could continue to be initiated by the Security Council without a prior report by the ICRC, i.e. the Security Council would remain master of its decision-making on questions of peace and security.

The Swiss Government and the ICRC may not welcome attempts to confer such a role on the ICRC, seeing in internationalization a derogation in some way from its unique situation derived from the neutrality of Switzerland. Moreover, the ICRC recognizes that it can barely cope with its present responsibilities and does not wish to expand them. It wishes to focus less on humanitarian operations and more on its role as custodian of international humanitarian law and to related functions such as the protecting of war victims.

It may well be a more feasible course, therefore, for governments to create a new organization, though still preferably outside the United Nations. In order to avoid the problems associated with United Nations agencies, such an organization should be constituted along the lines of my proposal for a remodeled ICRC, that is to say an organization fully backed by governments but not, strictly speaking, an inter-governmental organization in terms of its governance. Alternatively, a specialized agency within the United Nations system established by formal inter-governmental agreement could be set up. Such an agency would not be under the direction of the secretary-general. The relief functions of existing agencies and those of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs would be transferred to the new agency. Though less satisfactory than the other alternatives suggested, such an arrangement would be a major improvement on the existing situation. It would also be easier to achieve politically.

There is an opportunity to make real progress toward an efficient humanitarian regime during the current session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Assembly has on its agenda a report from the secretary-general on the new arrangements established under its Resolution 46/182, discussed earlier in this article. Donors are again seriously questioning the ability of the United Nations to coordinate its own relief efforts, let alone bring real cohesion to the overall international humanitarian response. The time has come for governments to turn away from a system that has over decades failed too often. The victims of conflict deserve better than more tinkering at the edges of an incorrigible system. □

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The Constraints of Russian Culture

Hugh Ragsdale

RUSSIAN CAPITALISM and Russian democracy: are they partners, or are they adversaries? American capitalists and democrats naturally assume that their Russian counterparts are partners. Our conception is based on two mistakes. First, democratic impulses are not nearly so rare in the Russian past as we imagine. Second, they have been distinctly hostile to competition and enterprise.

If authoritarianism has been a prominent feature of Russian life under both the czars and the Soviets, so has a populist and egalitarian kind of democracy. There are several examples. Best known was the peasant commune, the *mir* or *obshchina*, spontaneous democratic socialism at the grass roots. Ever so often the land belonging to the village commune was redivided in order to provide equality of economic opportunity for each household in the village. Second was the *artel*, a commercial cooperative operated in the same spirit. Third was that busybody forum which settled domestic disputes in urban housing during Stalin's time, the comradely courts. Fourth was—and still is—the somewhat obscure but fascinatingly provocative criminal society, glimpsed in most of the memoirs from the camps. Fifth, and easy to overlook given their subsequent history, were the impressive Soviets of 1905 and 1917.

Properly perceived, then, democracy was and is alive and well in Russia—but a peculiarly Russian kind of democracy. We have had the tendency to consider Russian democracy, like democracy everywhere in the fairy tale of the global democrats, as naturally progressive. On the contrary, Russian democracy tends to be conservative, socialistic, egalitarian, and cynically fatalistic. Neither under the Russian Empire nor under the Soviets has respect for capitalism, competition, and social and economic differentiation been a part of the popular ethic. Indeed, among the obstacles to the continuation of Russian reform today are the egalitarian and conservative spirit of Russian democracy and the conception that democracy has left them without freedom. It is hard to see, then, how transitions to democracy and capitalism at the same time can proceed successfully in the contemporary Russian Federation.

In fact, the expansion of a democratic dynamic from local politics, where it has been strong, into national politics, where it has been weak, must have a retrograde or even paralytic impact on the course of development there.

This dilemma is familiar to Russians, if not to outsiders. The émigré philosopher Alexander Zinoviev has spoken similarly in *Homo Sovieticus*[1] and *Communism as Reality*[2] of the scant Russian taste and capacity for liberal individualism. The gist of his argument is that the fixture of the *kollektiv* conditions everything, that it is as influential as the super-state or more so, that the authoritarian nature of the communist state derived principally from the *kollektiv*. Communism, he

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[1] *Homo sovetikus* (Lausanne, 1982).

[2] *Kommunizm kak realnost'* (Lausanne, 1981).

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says, was not the imposition of a form of serfdom by a malevolent conspiracy either of a single dictator or of a coterie of oligarchs. Rather, it was the population's own voluntary self-enserfment. Philip Hanson has called this phenomenon "Totalitarianism from Below."[3] Dominic Lieven of the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies wondered after a recent trip to the Soviet Union "whether Aleksandr Zinoviev wasn't after all right in arguing that the collectivist mentality of Russia found its near-perfect match in the Soviet system."[4] In August of 1990, Gavriil Popov, the mayor of Moscow at the time, warned in an article entitled "The Dangers of Democracy" in the *New York Review of Books* that the participation of the masses in politics would hinder the cause of economic reform.

The Mind of the Muzhik

TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN conceptions of democracy, it can be argued, are actually impediments to social and economic modernization. The *artel* has been characterized as reflecting "acceptance of adversity, mutual reliance, and an ethos of egalitarian collectivism rather than a culture of production and an ethos of corporate gain."[5] The peasant commune operated by the principle of the "toiling norm," i.e., a family was entitled to as much land as it could work relative to the total amount of land available to the commune and the capacity of the other families to work it. When Leo Tolstoy offered to free his serfs years before emancipation, they scratched their heads and declined. When Prime Minister Peter Stolypin in the early twentieth century tried to render the peasantry progressive and enterprising by dissolving the commune, the peasants resisted and ultimately defeated him.

Attitudes of egalitarianism, of dependence on the state, and of envy of anyone who gets ahead go together. They were familiar to Gleb Uspenskii, the nineteenth-century student of the peasant commune (*Notes from a Village Diary*). The two greatest economic reformers of the last emperor, Sergei Witte and Peter Stolypin, were frustrated by the same problem. In the words of Stolypin, "The Russian peasant has a passion for making everyone equal, for reducing everything to a common denominator, and since the masses cannot be raised to the level of the most capable, the most active, and the most intelligent, the best elements must be brought down to the level of understanding and ambition prevailing among the inferior, inert majority."[6]

Russian proverbs tend to corroborate this judgment, bespeaking as they do a cynical attitude toward an unrewarding world. "God is too high, and the czar is far away." "Marry a wife who can read, and she will find all the holidays in the calendar." "The Russian has three strong principles: perhaps, somehow, and never mind."

Comparative folklore suggests the same outlook. The tales of the brothers Grimm were characterized by W. H. Auden as something like morality plays in a different genre. He calls the tales of Hans Christian Andersen "parables." Very different are Russian fairy tales. Two standard characters are Ivan Czarevich (Ivan the Heir) and Ivanushka Durachok (Little Ivan the Little Fool). They appear like two avatars of the same personality. The single asset of Ivanushka Durachok is his foolishness. But in the world of Russian fantasy, as in the philos-

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[3]Philip Hanson, "Alexander Zinoviev: Totalitarianism from Below," *Survey* 26 (1982): pp. 28-48.

[4]Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR*, July 19, 1991, p. 15.

[5]Joseph Bradley, *Guns for the Tsar: American Technology and the Small-Arms Industry in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (DeKalb, 1990).

[6]George Vernadsky et al., eds., *A Source Book of Russian History*, 3 vols. (New Haven, 1972), 3: p.801.

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ophy of the Slavophiles, the last shall be first, and foolishness is the invariable elixir of victory for Ivanushka Durachok: providence always rallies to his cause. Ivan Czarevich embarks on what Joseph Campbell would call a quest, and he is assisted by a variety of magical sponsors. They give him wise advice, and he ignores it. Thus he gets ever deeper into trouble. But his good fairies come constantly to his rescue, and so his history exemplifies the triumph of folly, frivolousness, and bad judgment. The moral of these stories would seem to be that there is none. They exemplify rather a strikingly capricious fate. They do not contain any recognizable conception of responsibility. We look in vain for a reliable relationship of cause and effect. Most significantly, they lack the familiar idea that in order to achieve good results, it is necessary to make good efforts.

This state of affairs, however, is entirely natural. The folk mythology of a people must reflect its experience. In fortunate lands of milk and honey, where the homilies of Poor Richard are plausible because they are practical, they also serve to become self-fulfilling. Imagine, by contrast, recommending the idea that a penny saved is a penny earned to the seventeenth-century Russian merchants (*gosti*), often subjected without warning to the tax known as the "fifth money," i.e., one-fifth of their capital; or to those who lost their savings in Gorbachev's currency reform. Imagine promising the benefits of "early to bed, early to rise" to Stalin's collective farmers. Russians are often said to be risk-averse. If so, it is not remarkable: they have not had a very happy experience with their risks.

The Intelligentsia

THE ATTITUDES OF the intelligentsia, often so distinct from those of the common people, are comparable in this respect. If we consider what is probably our largest and most authoritative source-book of Russian elite self-expression, nineteenth-century fiction, we find there Goncharov's "Oblomov," that symbol of Russian lethargy who required fifty pages to get out of bed; Gogol's "dead souls"; Chekhov characters who describe themselves as "a generation of whimperers and neurasthenics" (consider *The Cherry Orchard*) and whom he describes as having all the moral force of "walking mildew." Turgenev gave us the name for a category of types known as "superfluous men." He divided all men into either Hamlets or Quixotes, and most of his were Hamlets, as he admitted that he was. The population of Russian fiction is an ironically misogynist society of strong women and weak men.

Consonant with this conception of Russian cultural character is the Russian reaction to Darwinism. Not surprisingly, given the positivist nature of nineteenth-century Russian social science, the pure doctrine as applied strictly to the animal kingdom in Darwin's own work the Russians found quite seductive. They objected vociferously, however, even to Darwin's suggestion that the theory of evolution was simply the application to the entire animal (including human) kingdom of the principles which Thomas Malthus had applied to human population. Social Darwinism, the idea of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, they found deeply offensive.

The nineteenth-century critic V. V. Rozanov observed long ago that Russians "were made for ideas and feelings, for prayer and music, but not to rule over people."[7] In fact, Russian Orthodoxy appears to play a part in this question. As Max Weber argues, there are two approaches to salvation. The ascetic-ecstatic attitude is world-rejecting, and it is exemplified by the religions of India, of the Kabala, the sufis and dervishes, and the mysticism of the Reformation and

[7] *The Apocalypse of Our Time* (1918-1919), quoted in S. V. Utechin, *Russian Political Thought: A Concise History* (New York, 1964), p. 169.

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Counter-Reformation. The ascetic-ethical attitude, on the other hand, is world-involved and rationalist. It is exemplified in mainstream Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism, especially, of course, in the Calvinists. It is obvious in which camp the Russian mystical traditions of hesychasm and kenoticism—quietist submissiveness—belong. The chief impulse of the hesychasts was "flight from the world."[8]

The role of Russian Orthodoxy between the defenseless people and the ravaging state is one of near legendary prostration. In Western religion, moral edification comes from moral striving. In Russian Orthodoxy, it comes from innocent suffering. The first saints, Boris and Gleb, are the classic examples. In much the same tradition are the *stranniki* and the *iurodivye*, the rootless pilgrims and the fools in Christ of Dostoevsky, Leskov, Solzhenitsyn, Shukshin, and Boris Vasiliev.

However difficult it may be for us to imagine, traditional Russian culture, in both its popular and elite forms, does not find the world to be rational, reliable, even intelligible, as it is presumed to be in the corporate boardroom, in the university, or at the bank.

Freedom from Insecurity

NOT ONLY MAY democracy and the recent economic reforms prove to be incompatible in Russia, but the coming of quasi-democracy has cost the Russians, with the exception of the intelligentsia, their traditional conception of freedom as equality and security.

In the film of the Russian expatriate community at Brighton Beach (Brooklyn) made by the PBS station in Boston early in the 1980s, "The Russians are Here," the émigrés repeat two observations like a constant refrain: "There is too little security in America, and there is too much freedom." It is true that the Russians have been led by Gorbachev and Yeltsin to believe in the superiority of the idea of the market, but their belief is in a pure abstraction, and when they deal with the particulars of the market in the streets, they realize at once that they do not like it. A July 28, 1991 *New York Times* survey reflects this point. It found that a slight majority of those polled preferred the idea of the market, but only a quarter preferred what the pollsters described as a German or American style of market. We hear daily the complaints of the population about the profiteering of the new co-op businessmen and the complaints of the latter about the complaints of the former, i.e., that they are criminals, Mafiosi, etc. Yeltsin was at one time forced to grant the Moscow city government the power to control prices. The Soviet declaration of the rights of man, passed by the Congress of People's Deputies on September 5, 1991, reflects distinctly socialist values, e.g., the right to work, the right to a sufficient and decent standard of living, the right to an education, the right to proper housing, and the right to free health care.

According to Raymond Aron in *Democracy and Totalitarianism* (1969), "Liberty in the vocabulary of Montesquieu means above all security, the guarantee that the citizens will be unmolested if they obey the law." This kind of legal security has been conspicuously absent from most of Russian history. From 1730, the nobility began to demand a *Rechtsstaat* (constitutional state). Catherine II (1762-1796) gave them reason to believe that she might grant one. She did not. The period 1762-1825 was filled with such plans for reform. None was implemented. By the 1860s, the age of the Great Reforms, a legal profession had developed, and it soon exerted real influence in the civil service. After the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, however, Alexander III reversed respect for a

[8]Pavel N. Miliukov, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kultury*, 6th ed., 3 vols. in 4 (St. Petersburg: Aleksandrov), 1909-1913, 3, part 1: 51.

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Western style of legality. Only in 1905 was a legally founded, written constitution published. The climax of legality in the history of Russia was likely reached on April 6, 1906 when Nicholas II was bluntly advised in the State Council that since the October Manifesto of the previous year had promised a constitution and a legislature, the word "unlimited" (*neogranichennyi*) was no longer an admissible description of monarchical power in Russia. A year later the solemn legality of 1906 was publicly violated by Nicholas and Prime Minister Stolypin when the electoral regime was scrapped—restricted—in a fashion which itself exemplified illegality. When the revolution arrived, all was violence and chaos from 1917 to 1921. At that time, the state, admitting temporary defeat in its efforts to establish a socialist socio-economic order, began to protect private property and private enterprise—the New Economic Policy. In 1928, this whole semi-legal structure was turned on its head in the Five-Year Plan. In 1936, the purges made matters worse.

Still, from the mid-1950s through the mid-1980s, the worst forms of juridical caprice were controlled, and the Soviet Union returned to a vague semblance of a lawful state. The situation was more customary (regular, predictable) than genuinely legal. If the law that prevailed was not the law that was written, at least most of the citizenry understood the parameters of the unwritten law and knew what to expect of it.

That situation has now deteriorated dreadfully for the average Russian citizen. According to contemporary observations, the capitalism developing in Russia today is probably the most rapacious and lawless there ever was. Hence, as ironic as it seems to people of our juridical conceptions, the Russian finds that he has forfeited a lawful regime in Brezhnev's time for an unlawful one today. By reference to the criteria of Montesquieu, he lives more nearly in a Hobbesian state of nature, where life is at best nasty, brutish, and unpleasant, if not yet quite short. At the present time, the kind of liberty represented by social mobility has disappeared in Russia except among those few fortunate and rapacious entrepreneurs lucky enough to live, in the opinion of their victims, at the expense of their fellows. Most Russians are clearly less satisfied with the kind of justice which they experience today than they were in the days of Brezhnev's stagnation (*zastoi*). An August 1992 *Izvestia* public-opinion poll found that 69 percent of the people in Moscow would prefer a restoration of the old Soviet Union to the Russian Federation in which they now live.

The new economic insecurity of many Russians reinforces another Russian tradition: the egalitarianism of envy. Anatolii Sobchak, the mayor of St. Petersburg, illustrated this attitude by telling Hedrick Smith the story of God appearing to a Russian peasant, offering to give him anything that he wanted on the understanding that his neighbor would be given twice as much. The peasant agonized and thought and finally said to God: "Put out one of my eyes."

The conclusion to which these observations drive us is the one to which similar considerations drove Theodore von Laue in respect to the Witte industrial reform of the 1890s: no cultural graft, no Head Start program of Western economics, is likely to lead to a revolution of mentalities and thereby to early Russian prosperity. The Russians are caught in a double bind, damned if they do and damned if they don't. A quick economic advance requires massive étatiste intervention, and that is precisely the remedy which has afflicted them with their current malaise. Yet to inaugurate the revolution of attitudes required to make them rational, prudent, and provident by Western standards is an unnatural act of cultural treason. How Russian leaders respond to this dilemma will determine the future of Russia—and, perhaps, not of Russia alone. □

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International Crime and Punishment

Alfred P. Rubin

THE IDEA OF an international criminal court is supported by many people and now has moved from the lobbying of lawyers and moralists to an area of practical action. At the close of the Gulf War, the United States sent a team to investigate Iraqi atrocities with an eye to bringing those who committed them before an international tribunal authorized to apply international law to the acts of individuals. A recent Resolution of the United Nations Security Council calls for an investigation of at least equally repulsive atrocities reportedly committed in former Yugoslavia. Former United States Secretary of State Eagleberger even named a half dozen leaders of former Yugoslavia as fit defendants.

It can be argued that the failure to set up such a tribunal after the Gulf War was a failure merely of political will. But it can also be argued that the failure came about as a result of serious consideration, and that the inhibitions in setting up such a tribunal are inherent in the international legal order. If that is so, then there is no failure of will, but only a realization by those focusing on practicalities that the sort of tribunal envisaged by enthusiasts for international law could not achieve the goals its proponents have in mind. Before too much time of able people is consumed by the effort to establish an international criminal court, it might be well to examine the real obstacles to achieving their civilizing goal by this means in the current international legal order.

It is easy to define acts that are crimes under what is conceived to be international criminal law. National war crimes tribunals, military commissions, and courts martial have often enough tried and even executed persons for violating the "laws and customs of war" established in international practice. "Common law" crimes can be created (or found inherent in the system) by tribunals authorized to do that, and prohibitions on retroactive "legislation" can be ignored or reasoned away, as was done by the victor's tribunals at Nuremberg and Tokyo with regard to the "crime" of planning and waging "aggressive war" and "crimes against humanity." Some other acts, like participation in the international drug trade, can be made "international crimes" by treaty or by consistent state practice accepted as law by the international community.

But the new crimes created for Nuremberg were defined by the victorious allies only in the context of Nazi and Imperial Japanese activities and were not applied to the Soviets, who also invaded Poland and the Baltic States by what were evidently pre-arranged "acts of aggression," and whose treatment of some national minorities might have been considered within any definition of "crimes against humanity" that had not been drafted to apply only to the defeated enemies. The treaties relating to drug trafficking reflect similar sensitivities. They do not provide "universal" jurisdiction, they oblige the treaty parties to exercise only their established jurisdiction against persons within that jurisdiction whose acts fit the treaty categories.

Those arguing for the establishment of an international tribunal frequently claim that crimes against humanity as defined for Nuremberg can now be defined without the restrictive language that made those pro-

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ceedings seem hypocritical. That is so. But unless the law can be seen to apply to Israel's leaders as well as to leaders of various Arab factions, to George Bush (who ordered the invasion of Panama) as well as Saddam Hussein (who ordered the invasion of Kuwait), it will seem hypocritical again. This is not to say that Israeli and American leaders cannot defend their actions, but so can Arab leaders. Should any of them be obliged to?

This raises an even deeper problem. Who decides who are to be the prosecuting authorities, investigators, and judges, and who is to erect and supervise the facilities for punishment? Would the great powers trust the UN General Assembly's discretion in that selection? If so, presumably Israel's leaders and possibly our own would be the first indicted. Would the General Assembly majority be satisfied with the objectivity of the Security Council and its Great Power vetoes? Would the United States, which refused to appear before the International Court in the Hague to respond to Nicaragua's successful complaint, accept the judges of the International Court as impartial either as judges or as a body to select judges and prosecutors?

TO SOLVE these questions, advocates for such a tribunal frequently analogize their notion of international crimes to the international legal order's treatment of those who participate in the slave trade, "piracy" or "genocide." The analogy is misplaced. Despite the vigorous rhetoric, there has never been a coherent practice by states or other bodies to enforce the rules relating to the international slave trade, piracy and genocide as if they were part of some universal criminal law. National laws against what national legislators have called "piracy" or "slave trading" have been applied against persons within the traditional reach of national legislation, but the few attempts to apply such laws to the acts of foreigners that did not impact on the prescribing state have normally failed.

The reasons for this failure have to do with the structure of the state system on which the current legal order rests. For example, the Genocide Convention, which defines the crime and obliges states to punish it, limits the jurisdiction to the state in whose territory it happened (which never punishes the acts of its own officials) or an international tribunal which has not yet been established. That is as far as the states framing the Convention were willing to go. Thus, there have never been any trials for "genocide." There is no reason to expect states to agree to any greater transfer to international civil servants or others, of the authority to cite political leaders as "criminals" to be hauled before strangers and tried. Even "terrorists" regard themselves as "freedom fighters" or an "army of God" and deny to those outside their own movement the moral or legal authority to apply to their actions a purported "universal law" which they reject or whose application to their particular circumstances they refuse to acknowledge. In these circumstances, applying to them our version of what the criminal law should be is likely to create even deeper resentments and more violence.

Nonetheless, on 25 May the Security Council adopted a proposal to establish an International Criminal Court. It relies for enforcement on the provision of the United Nations charter requiring members of the UN to carry out some Security Council "decisions." But Bosnian Serbs are not represented in the UN except by Bosnians, against whom they are fighting. If the Serbs will not, and the Bosnians cannot, arrest the accused war criminals, who is bound to enforce the "decision"? What happens if they don't? And the tribunal's jurisdiction is to be restricted to events in the former Yugoslavia. Since the current international legal order rests on a notion of "sovereign equality" of states under the law, and the states that set it up are unwilling to submit themselves to its authority, the arrangement is inherently hypocritical; another "victor's tribunal" being set up belatedly by the winners of the Second World War.

There are many other practical and legal

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problems, some of which can be overcome; most of which cannot. Like the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 legally renouncing recourse to war: it seems the product of enthusiasts, at best useful in providing a public-relations rationale for hanging a few temporarily helpless villains, on deeper analysis, an embarrassment.

There are several other ameliorating actions that could be explored, none in the "criminal law" mode. International law is not a criminal law system; it is more akin to constitutional law, where enforcement rests on political counterpressures and foreseeable middle- and long-term reactions. A militarily organized movement that commits atrocities is likely to lose allies, unify its enemies, waste its energy in daring strikes of dubious military or political value, and ultimately turn on itself. The United States applied the laws of war in its own civil war 130 years ago not because "the law" compelled that application, but because it was in the interest of the United States to apply that law even if the overall framework of the international legal order did not require it. So held the United States Supreme Court in 1877.

From this point of view, Saddam Hussein has established a reputation as a person whose committed word is worthless and whose ability to lead by moral example and persuasion must be small. And those who believe that an ethnically "pure" Serbia or "Serbo-Bosnia" will be able to resume a level of economic activity that rests on contracts, property rights, mutual respect and the other things that make economic development possible and life bearable, are certain to be disappointed; as disappointed as the radical right in South Africa that thought that South Africa's international investors would not notice that apartheid was politically and economically destabilizing and its proponents not attractive associates even for hard-headed business-people.

In sum, the world would do better grappling with the tragedies of former Yugoslavia and the Middle East, acknowledging that violations of international morality and rules of law are not analogous to violations of national criminal law, but that no law requires anybody to do business with people whose behavior they regard as despicable, or to accept, in lieu of cash, the word of proven liars. □

Bottom Line vs. Front Line

Seth Cropsey

IN EARLY AUGUST of 1990, the U.S. Air Force's First Tactical Fighter Wing, based at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, was ordered to the Middle East as Operation Desert Shield got under way. The unit began to arrive in eastern Saudi Arabia fourteen hours later. Ten years earlier in 1980, the same fighter wing failed its operational readiness examination: 47 out of its 72 aircraft were grounded for lack of spare parts. In the intervening decade, the Army, Navy, and Air Force's coffers swelled with modern sophisticated weaponry and supporting equipment; their ranks filled with ambitious, highly motivated young officers and enlisted personnel. The Defense Department is the one part of the federal government in which throwing more money at a problem pro-

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duces useful results. It is also the one agency of the government most susceptible to decay and failure when funds are withdrawn.

The Clinton administration is precipitately withdrawing money from the nation's defense accounts with no firmer justification than its hope for ten or twenty years of world peace, or at least its expectation that the foreseeable future holds no serious challenges to American interests around the world. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin's "bottom-up" review of America's future military needs has never been anything more than an ill-concealed effort to clothe defense budget cuts directed by the White House with the respectable attire of numbers and charts manufactured by an obedient if reluctant Pentagon.

In his February 17 State of the Union Address, President Clinton declared that he would cut $120 billion—or twice the amount he promised he would cut as a candidate—from Defense for the fiscal years 1994 through 1997. Five weeks later, at the end of March, Aspin said he would undertake a "bottom-up" review of future U.S. defense requirements. "Bottom-line" would be a more accurate description of what has taken place since. The secretary of defense does not publicly conclude that his department needs more money than the president has said is available. Aspin has been left to convince the nation that the U.S. is to have a strategy-driven budget rather than a budget-driven strategy. Fortunately for this administration, current events make it easy to persuade the public that all is well. Unfortunately for the administration, Aspin has not even been up to this simple task.

Speaking at the National Defense University in Washington on June 16, Aspin suggested that the U.S. should retain enough force to be able to fight and win two regional wars—but not quite at once. Dubbed by its administration supporters a "win-hold-win" strategy, the plan bore an unmistakably theoretical imprint. It called for American forces to respond—in the case, for example, of wars that occurred simultaneously in the Persian Gulf and the Korean Peninsula—by holding one enemy at bay while defeating the other. After the first victory, U.S. forces would be moved in to support the holding action and go on the offensive.

If this plan did not specifically encourage such dictators as those who rule Iraq, Iran, and North Korea to coordinate their aggression, it would likely have a similar result. Once one power had engaged the U.S. another would have the strongest interest to make its move. In either case, troops and military equipment cannot be moved around the world like pieces on a chess board. In combat, the former are killed and wounded; the latter is destroyed and incapacitated. Leaving aside the logistical nightmare of transporting many men and large amounts of materiel from one distant theater to another, the notion of playing international hopscotch with combat forces, while attractive to armchair theoreticians, is in practice useless.

Aspin clung to the concept of "win-hold-win" for a week and a day, abandoning it on June 24 in a speech to retired flag officers at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington. U.S. forces, the secretary declared upon reflection, must be able to fight and win two regional wars at the same time. This fooled no one. A mid-level officer who was participating in the administration's strategy review told the *Washington Post* that "we're wrapping a veneer of a strategy on a budget that's already been decided." During a March 30 hearing before the House Armed Services Committee, Aspin admitted as much himself. Responding to a congressman who asked if the administration's defense budget figures had been pulled out of the air, Aspin said, "they're a little better than that, but not much. These numbers are built on a macroeconomic basis, not on a threat analysis...."

In plain language, the Clinton defense plan for the next five years is based on a strategy tailored to its budget request, and a budget which is unrelated to the threats facing this country. This suggests the administration's lack of seriousness about defense, but owing to the military's currently healthy

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condition, it does not spell immediate danger. A strong military takes a long time to assemble. And it can take a drawn-out period to dismember if the usual cost-cutting tools of base closures, pay cuts, reduced operating schedules, postponed future purchases, and gradual force reductions are adopted. These measures will bring defense expenditures down gradually, avoiding the predictable domestic dislocations and international shocks that would occur if the U.S. were suddenly to choke or eliminate its future purchases of military hardware.

There is a good chance that this or something like it will happen. Congress is increasingly unwilling to accede to the administration's plan to cap military pay. As a result, Aspin may have to look elsewhere to achieve the savings arbitrarily set by the original Clinton defense budget. Unable to persuade the White House to compensate by increasing its initial five-year defense spending figure, the Pentagon is now contemplating the real possibility that its authority to spend in the coming fiscal year will fall by ten percent, or as much as $30 billion. If this occurs, the new administration could find itself slashing budget authority in one year by as much as it had originally planned to cut in five. This will require chopping future purchases of major weapons systems to the bone. Indeed, the administration's 1994 budget request for procurement is 17 percent below the current year's spending level. Whether or not it foresaw so drastic a result so quickly, Aspin's budget clearly pointed the way towards the same outcome.

Since he was a congressman, Aspin has strongly supported readiness, i.e. the proficiency of training, and supply of spare parts and replacements by which the military measures its preparedness to go into combat at a moment's notice. On June 2 this year, the secretary told the Air Force Academy's graduating class that "no goal I have for the Defense Department is more important than maintaining a force that's ready to fight."

There are, however, other equally important indices of military force, most notably its size and sophistication. Aspin, in his June Colorado commencement address, proposed that the U.S. "cut whole divisions and make sure that the ones remaining are in a high state of readiness." The budget figures on which the "bottom-up" review are based support this approach. Of the four options for future military spending which Aspin drew up last year when he was chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, the Clinton budget comes closest to number three in descending order of strength. Starting from 1992, both the administration's budget and Aspin's third option envision slicing an average of $181 billion to reach a goal of $246 billion in defense budget authority in 1997. This will yield an American force that is significantly smaller than the one which—according to Pentagon leaks—is needed to fight one war, hold another enemy simultaneously at bay, and then move the victorious units from the first theater into the second to achieve a complete triumph.

The "bottom-up" review will see to it that the force which does remain is prepared, but small. The Aspin third option calls for only eight active Army divisions. A force this size would represent a 57 percent decrease from today's active U.S. land forces strength, leaving the American Army with a little more than one-fourth as many infantry, motorized and mechanized divisions as North Korea and Iraq respectively currently field. Faced with a war in each of these places at once, the "win-hold-win" plan is a pipe dream, the two-war stratagem absurd. Aspin's "bottom-up" review notwithstanding, Clinton's defense budget will not fund either plan.

As is often charged against the military brass, this secretary of defense is fighting the last war, albeit a political one. It was the unpreparedness of the Carter administration—as demonstrated in such disasters as the failed attempt to rescue American hostages in Teheran—that exposed the administration's weak military policy. The current administration means not to repeat this mistake. So, the Air Force's First

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Tactical Fighter Wing, whose readiness was compared above over a ten-year stretch, will be able to deploy at a moment's notice—if it still exists. Predictably, Aspin's effort to avoid previous mistakes will lead to other ones.

The author of the "bottom-up" review was one of the original whiz-kids, a protégé of former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and a thorough-going believer in systems analysis. In the ordered world of systems analysts, numbers, matrices, and cost-benefit analyses hold the keys to knotty problems, whether it's how to defeat the North Vietnamese or how to preserve America's position as the world's leading military power. McNamara told the military to count bodies as a gauge of success. Aspin has decided to measure U.S. military strength as a function of the "c-numbers" (by which the armed forces rate a unit's combat readiness).

But, the military, which has its own soft spot for measuring the world in numbers, may go along with the disciple much as they followed the master into using slide rules to calculate the progress of the Vietnam war. Aspin has named a commission of distinguished, retired senior officers headed by the highly respected former chief of staff of the Army, General Edward "Shy" Meyer to stand guard over the U.S. military's readiness. Unfortunately, this is like appointing a team of ear doctors to monitor the hearing of a patient whose limbs have been blown off.

The systems analyst-inspired bottom-up review hacks away at forces, slashes the procurement of future weapons, negates the benefits of research by failing to purchase its fruits, but—logically enough—keeps the units that remain in place healthy and ready to fight. This logic is unlikely to impress Saddam Hussein, Kim il-Sung, Mohamed Farah Aideed, Slobodan Milosevic, Radovan Karadzic, or any of the world's other aspiring bad actors.

COMMUNISM UTTERLY failed as a political system, but it succeeded in leaving its vanquishers with the mistaken idea that those who threaten liberty must be large, coordinated, and possessed of a political doctrine.

Unsystematic nationalism—bad enough in itself—is either incipient or rampant from Southeast Asia, where people are increasingly restive about Chinese minorities in their midst, to the old Soviet Union's periphery, to the heart of Europe. Americans might also see the dangers of the offer made in July by six Muslim nations and the Palestine Liberation Organization to send 18,000 troops to Bosnia to defend its besieged Muslim population. Alternatively, it could become clear in the future that the West's failure to stop Serbian aggression will be read by a future Russian leader as an endorsement of the same policy towards its nuclear-armed neighbors that are home to sizable Russian ethnic minorities.

We are—as everyone knows, though the current administration's defense plan fails to acknowledge it—in a time of great uncertainty. Unclear about what is happening in the world and even more unsure about how America should respond. Other statesmen, more experienced and more accustomed to exercising power abroad than Bill Clinton and his lieutenants, have in the past made seriously wrong predictions—for example, William Pitt the Younger, who as prime minister informed the House of Commons on February 17, 1792 that "there never was a time in the history of this country when we might more reasonably have expected peace than at this moment."

Pitt had no systems analysts, and if he had, they would have been the last to forecast the power and aggressiveness unleashed by the revolution across the Channel. But the prime minister did enjoy the good fortune of being soon proved wrong. Twenty years of war with France broke out twelve months later, thus saving Pitt from the consequences of the decreased defense request he had submitted. Let us hope that this kind of correction of the Clinton administration's course will not be necessary. □

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Reagan's Pragmatist

James Schlesinger

George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1993). 1138 pp., $30.00.

THIS NATION owes much to George Pratt Shultz for his six and one-half years service during the 1980s as secretary of state. Put simply, he was the right man in the right place at the right time. In the circumstances in which he was placed, his weaknesses were massively outweighed by his strengths—and by his services to the nation. Admittedly in other circumstances the outcome might have been different. Both the times and the other players surrounding Shultz served to enhance the value of his own remarkable strengths. These attributes are reflected in this huge and comprehensive memoir, which will serve as a veritable gold mine for historians in the future. Shultz is the first to acknowledge that his writings reflect his "own angle of view." While they are less *consciously* self-serving than most works of this genre, by expressing his conviction so forthrightly, Shultz reveals quite clearly not only that angle of view but its defects.

First let me address what is essential for understanding both these memoirs and Shultz's role in history—Shultz, the man.[1] It, no doubt, is an exaggeration to state that "character is destiny"; nonetheless, for those who do not simply drift with the tide, character is the key to understanding why individuals performed as they did in the historical setting in which they were placed. In this respect Shultz was doubly fortunate: he was a man of strong character enhanced by the time in which he served. Indeed everything about Shultz exudes strength. He is a man of great integrity—and, though a skillful tactician, not given to the little dishonesties that mark all too much of political life. He possesses, indeed is possessed by, a supreme self-confidence that borders on self-righteousness. He has immensely strong convictions and emotions. When frustrated—as he was with President Nixon's imposition of price controls in 1971—he can scarcely disguise his disappointment. The upshot is that Shultz tends to plow ahead, to stay the course. That is his method. Sometimes it works and sometimes it does not.

Shultz devoted some of his academic years to serving as a labor arbitrator, and that background has served him well. He searches out the underlying needs of parties to a dispute—what they feel they must have, where they are prepared to yield. He is keenly observant, and an excellent listener, but not particularly good at theorizing. (If the truth be known he has very little use for theory.) His actions are governed by observing the facts, not by theories. No man that I know is better at summarizing a lengthy group discussion—in a manner that bends that summary toward supporting the conclusion he hopes will emerge. In short, Shultz is the ultimate step-by-step negotiator—far better serving as the honest broker than as a long-range strategist.

I have suggested that Shultz was the right man at the right time. There are three reasons for this. First, he was perhaps the ideal man to work with Ronald Reagan. Low key, quietly persuasive, appropriately deferential, he fitted into the Reagan mood of general affability. Arriving in the wake of the "tempestuous" Al Haig, Shultz had a benign manner and a calm-

[1]This writer served with Shultz throughout the years of the Nixon Administration—and served under him for a year at the OMB.

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ing effect.

Second, Shultz was the man of common sense in a group whose principal members were driven primarily by ideology, and many of whom, quite simply, were not up to the job. In this mixture Shultz served as the leavening agent, in the most important matters, gradually leading his president along that path that the president intuitively preferred.

Third—and perhaps most important of all—it was the times! Shultz came along at that critical juncture of the Cold War at which Brezhnev gave way to Andropov and Chernenko, and then quickly to Gorbachev. Shultz, ever the keen observer of personalities and events, saw something that others failed to see: the Soviet Union was undergoing massive change. Shultz turned out to be the right man in that he was not burdened by the wisdom (and the inhibitions) of arms control theory, Sovietology, anticommunist ideology, and the like. He was thus inclined and reasonably well-equipped to engage in his own style of pragmatism.

By shucking off the accumulated wisdom of thirty-odd years of dealing with the Soviets, Shultz made remarkable and surprising progress toward a new relationship with the Soviets and ultimately the end of the Cold War. In so doing he distressed and infuriated some of his more hidebound colleagues within the administration—and worried many outside the administration, who were not in the same position to observe the changed tone in dealing with the Soviets. Never in thrall to theory or doctrine, Shultz facilitated change that would have come far more slowly had he not been there. Indeed, when the Bush administration, more cautious, more conventional, arrived with its stance of containment-plus, our receptiveness toward Gorbachev slowed down at what was a crucial moment of history.

Shultz's strength of conviction shines forth in these memoirs. It is an astonishingly candid document. He displays little charity or even understanding for those who oppose him—or who just take a different point of view. Though politely phrased he has limited respect for his senior colleagues. He despises and distrusts Bill Casey, scorns Judge Clark, and dislikes Cap Weinbergers's views and actions, if not Weinberger himself. Bud McFarlane is treated for the most part as an incompetent meddler. The CIA is untrustworthy and the Pentagon is recalcitrant. Those at a lower level do not fare much better. The clear exceptions to this tendency are Shultz's own subordinates, who, if they are not, like Thomas Enders, too independent, are strongly praised. Regrettably many of these characterizations are both persuasive and justified. The Reagan administration was not marked by either strength or discernment at the highest levels. For intellectual capacity one had to move down a level or two to the Paul Nitzes, Richard Perles, Richard Burts, and Fred Iklés—and even at this lower level truly talented individuals were not commonplace. Shultz's scorn for the president's staff, especially the staff of the National Security Council, seems quite justified. Yet no previous secretary of state has castigated the NSC staff so explicitly, so firmly, and so frequently.

On almost all subjects Shultz is prepared to follow the administration line. For example, he always spoke glowingly about Reaganomics, even though, as former budget director, he must have been keenly aware of the fiscal wreckage that flowed from the administration's generous tax policies combined with its unwillingness to take on the entitlement programs. The immense deficits that resulted lowered the national savings rate to the point that we had to borrow abroad to sustain a much reduced level of investment activity—and to suffer a much lowered rate of productivity growth. But Shultz was prepared to echo the administration line.

Similarly Shultz speaks almost rhapsodically about the Strategic Defense Initiative—though he did not know where it came from, initially raised many of the right questions, and was left to grapple with the consequences. The result was a set of incantations and meaningless catch phrases that defy comprehension. The SDI was to become a litmus test of loyalty to the administration, so that, for example, Brent

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Scowcroft is quickly passed over as a possible national security adviser, because "he had been critical of SDI." Nonetheless, though Shultz is willing to follow the administration on almost all *substantive* issues, he is wholly unprepared to follow it when it leads into a morass of unethical and possibly illegal behavior. As a result we have the most dramatic, if not the most significant, events of Shultz's tenure: his unwillingness to embrace or to serve as an apologist for the administration's under-the-table trafficking in arms with the so-called Iranian moderates.

Much is already known about this long-gathering storm, especially with the publications of the most salient excerpts of Shultz's memoirs in *Time* magazine. Though in this instance Shultz violated the advice that he regularly tendered on substantive though not ethical issues—find out what the president really wants (such as "to rid the world of nuclear weapons") and try to carry out his wishes—the long-running drama was entirely to Shultz's credit. Shultz fulfilled the role of good cabinet officer: he tendered good advice and refused to lend himself to total folly in the name of supposed loyalty. Though he infuriated many of his colleagues by his refusal to participate in a cover up, and the first lady reportedly was calling for his head, Shultz came to embody an ethical tone that permitted the administration ultimately to move beyond the Iran-*Contra* scandal. Thus, Shultz's behavior probably saved the administration from itself in the short-run and unquestionably helped save its historical reputation in the long-run.

IN SO LIMITED a space one can hardly touch upon the countless events and issues that occurred during nearly two presidential terms. There were numerous successes. One might start with the calming of our relations with our allies, which had been disrupted by an unseemly dispute over the proposed Soviet gas pipeline to Western Europe. The squabble had erupted when the United States sought to prevent pipeline construction through extraterritorial reach, by requiring its overseas subsidiaries and licensees to break contracts. The Europeans, quite understandably, felt this to be not only bad policy, which was arguable, but a clear abuse of America's political and legal powers. Shultz managed to quiet the controversy and to restore a degree of harmony to the alliance.

Another dispute over a presidential visit to a German military cemetery at Bitburg was handled with equal diplomatic skill. The administration recognized that the importance of our German ally and of the NATO alliance transcended the domestic discontent that the visit aroused—and rose courageously to the challenge. More significantly, the administration pressed ahead with the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe despite widespread agitation against that essential action. Of similar importance, the sometimes ruffled U.S. relations with China and with Japan were placed on a reasonably stable basis. Indeed relations with Japan flourished during the Reagan years, perhaps to our longer-term cost in that both the Japanese and ourselves were seduced into ignoring the deep-seated problems regarding trade that were to flare in subsequent years.

In other matters the results were somewhat more mixed. Shultz rightly takes some pride in the effectiveness with which the United States helped ease Ferdinand Marcos out of office. What he fails to develop, perhaps understandably, is that the U.S. role in the affair took place *against* the clear desire of President Reagan to support his old friend, President Marcos. It required a veritable conspiracy of senior officers within the Department of State to place Mr. Reagan in a position in which he ultimately had no alternative but to abandon Marcos. While Shultz does not for obvious reasons spell this out, it ill comports with his general homilies about finding out what the president wants to do and then attempting to carry out those wishes.

Grenada turned out to be a triumph of American political-military policy. The United States found—and seized—an opportunity to rid itself of a somewhat bizarre, quasi-Marxist

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nuisance in the Caribbean that had fallen under Cuban influence. Though one could spare some of the moralizing, the opportunity was effectively, not to say ruthlessly, exploited. We were also amazingly lucky in that a different disposition of Cuban anti-aircraft capabilities might have inflicted upon us a level of casualties that would have marred the triumph.

An interesting aspect of the Grenada affair is Shultz's consternation and irritation with Mrs. Thatcher and the British government for its failure strongly to support the American intervention. Shultz apparently feels that Mrs. Thatcher was under obligation to us for our support during the Falklands war. In this connection, however, he simply ignores such matters as residual British annoyance over the abuse of American power in the Soviet gas pipeline episode; the American unwillingness either to consult with or inform the British in advance, thereby embarrassing the prime minister and foreign minister in the House of Commons; the understandable British reservations under those circumstances of the United States invading a member of the Commonwealth; and quite possibly Mrs. Thatcher's genuine doubts regarding the propriety of the U.S. removing a government simply because it did not like it. This is but one example of Shultz's powerful emotions getting in the way of his objectivity.

Such emotional overreaction regarding allies was perhaps most dramatically, if not most disgracefully, displayed in the sanctions imposed on New Zealand for its unwillingness to receive nuclear-powered vessels in its ports after the Labor Party victory in 1984. The New Zealand prime minister hoped to coast by on the tacit understanding that had existed throughout the 1970s, when the United States quietly abided by local preferences. Instead the U.S. turned furiously on New Zealand, denounced it, imposed sanctions, and tore up the ANZUS Treaty. It was an astonishing performance. One might have concluded that little New Zealand threatened to bring down the entire alliance system of the Free World. The stand-up comics had a field day: democracy endangered by "New Zealand thugs." It was not America's finest hour. Perhaps the most interesting thing is the total absence of any reference to the New Zealand affair in these memoirs.

Less surprisingly, strong emotion played a continuing role in the Middle East. American fury, more understandably than in the New Zealand case, repeatedly shifted back and forth from the Israeli to the Arab side. Shultz had inherited a nasty conflict in Lebanon and sought, like others before him, to play the role of honest broker. Considerable effort was invested in negotiating the Israeli-Lebanese Agreement of May 17, 1983, according to which all foreign forces (including Syrian forces) would be withdrawn from Lebanon and the war would be terminated. On paper it appeared to be an immense accomplishment. However, it depended upon the willingness of Hafez Assad to withdraw his forces—in accordance with an agreement in which he had not participated and about which he felt inadequately consulted. Assad (as was predictable) refused to cooperate. The entire involvement turned into a shambles.

After the Phalange's slaughter of Palestinians at Sabra and Shatila, a small detachment of Marines had been redeployed to Beirut as part of a multilateral peacekeeping force. Over time the U.S. became increasingly identified as a party to the conflict, siding with the Maronites—and ultimately directing air and naval gun fire against the Druse and the Shiites. In October the Marine Barracks, which were inadequately protected, were blown up, and 241 Marines were killed. That led to an embarrassingly rapid withdrawal of the U.S. Marines—a climax to a long series of embarrassments.

Shultz, a strong advocate of persevering in Lebanon, quite sensibly asks: "What went wrong? Should U.S. forces have gone into Lebanon in the first place?....Was the May 17th Agreement a futile exercise?....Should we have used much greater military capabilities?" Those are the right questions. They should have been addressed a little earlier than they seemed to have been. This writer would con-

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clude (as he did in 1983) that the United States should not send a token force into a hostile region for symbolic reasons. In Lebanon it should have emulated President Eisenhower's 1958 action and dispatched a massive force. If the original mission is a modest one (peacekeeping), that mission should not be gradually altered to one of a major (and hostile) participant without thorough review of the military deployment. And, finally, negotiations can rarely be crowned with success if major players, who are deeply involved, are ignored.

The unhappy events in Lebanon provided a backdrop to a continuing struggle over terrorism that pitted State versus Defense, with Shultz advocating greater and earlier use of force—and the Pentagon demurring. Shultz regularly made speeches advocating preemption based on positive intelligence. Weinberger issued his Principles. It is easy to poke fun at Weinberger's position, for it seemed to suggest that the United States should never use force unless there was a prior *guarantee* for continued public support of an engagement, which, of course, no one could provide. Nonetheless, his admonition of caution cannot so lightly be dismissed. The Israeli policies of preemption and tit-for-tat retaliation have not eliminated terrorism. The United States is scarcely in the position of Israel. To preempt frequently on the basis of "positive intelligence" would gradually erode both public and international support.

The difficulties in defining terrorism should also be noted. One must, at the outset, distinguish between civilian and military targets. The Israelis habitually have a rather broadbrush definition of terrorism, and Shultz has tended to follow them. We have regularly described the bombing of the Marine Barracks as an act of terrorism. But from the standpoint of Hezbollah, it was an act of war against a hostile military force (against which there had been regular prior attacks.) Such an act of war in their view was akin to the actions against Grenada or Libya that we felt quite justified in taking. Indeed Hezbollah might well conclude that its own "military" action was even more successful than the American action against Libya, because the Americans withdrew and caused no further trouble.

In the summer of 1985, TWA 847 had been hijacked and moved to Beirut. In the fall of 1985 terrorists seized the Achille Lauro. Shultz continued his effort to battle terrorism. But he had trouble bringing the rest of the administration along. From time to time, when Shultz insisted, the White House would issue a supporting statement to the effect that the United States would not yield to terrorists. Shultz believed he had the president's support. But whether that was real support or merely easy rhetoric remained an open question. It should be noted that this was the first time frame in which the White House initiated its arms-for-hostages negotiations with Iran. Within the terrorist network the regular declamations of the United States, coming from Shultz and others, that we would never yield to terrorists must have had an increasingly entertaining—and reassuring—sound.

LET US TURN finally to what is Shultz's greatest glory: the revision of our relations with the Soviet Union. One can scarcely praise Shultz highly enough for this accomplishment, for he, keenly observant and a good listener, saw something in the Soviet Union long before others did. Indeed, others continued to extrapolate the past and to utter their baleful prophecies, and to deride Shultz in the process. Shultz was fortunate, no doubt, that he came along in the Age of Gorbachev rather than the Age of Brezhnev. Yet, without Shultz we would have continued to grapple with the Soviet Threat, after it had begun to subside, and "the evil empire," long after the evil had begun to ebb. Since the course he advocated, even with the backing of the president, was not widely popular within the administration or within the prime constituency groups of the Republican Party (although it had wider support in the

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general public), Shultz deserves high marks for courage—a virtue that he possesses in abundance. Shultz helped nurse the budding relationships—in personal encounters, at summits, and in-between summits. He got to know Shevardnadze, as well as Gorbachev. He recognized that they were somehow "different" from their predecessors.

Yet, despite this dramatically altered relationship, we were unable quickly to capitalize upon it. Major arms control agreements, including the long-desired reduction in strategic arms, were long delayed and had to await the coming of the Bush administration. The principal reason lay in the president's and administration's obsession with the Strategic Defense Initiative. This obsession reached its culmination at the ill-prepared and ill-executed summit at Reyjkavik, which could have been the administration's crowning achievement, but turned out to be a near-disaster. Shultz argues vehemently that Reyjkavik was misunderstood and that, contrary to the usual impressions, it was a great achievement. To be sure, he is partly right. Gorbachev indeed was prepared significantly to reduce strategic weapons. It was a breakthrough. The failure lies in that the United States forfeited an opportunity, because it became fixated on the wrong objectives and failed properly to respond to Gorbachev's offer.

The president, who had long wanted (with Shultz's apparent support) to "rid the world of nuclear weapons" was apparently ready to accept the elimination of *all* strategic weapons. That position had not even been broached to our European allies, who for almost four decades had relied upon America's nuclear might to redress the imbalance in conventional forces. Their subsequent dismay, when the substance of Reyjkavik became public knowledge, can readily be imagined—despite Shultz's effort to suggest that they had a favorable reaction. Nor had our position been discussed with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The president of the United States was engaged in brainstorming and wish-fulfillment in a critical negotiation.

The final American position called for the elimination of all ballistic missiles in two tranches over a ten-year period. Meanwhile all anti-ballistic missile research permitted under the Treaty would continue. After ten years either side could deploy ABM defenses. Gorbachev, by contrast, insisted that any ABM research be confined to the laboratory. And on that minor difference the negotiations fell apart.

Thus, the paradoxical American position was ironically that deployment of ABM defenses *after the elimination of ballistic missiles* was so important that research should not be inhibited at all. (The mark of fanaticism, it has been said, is to redouble one's efforts, as one loses sight of one's objective.) The crucial need for ABM defenses after ballistic missiles have been eliminated is not obvious. Moreover, the deployment of ballistic missiles was the basis of the relative invulnerability of both sets of strategic forces. Their elimination would have restored the vulnerability of the U.S. deterrent. The U.S. would, once again, have been dependent upon the survival of a handful of bomber bases. When the negotiations collapsed, the defense community in the west, and indeed, most of the world, breathed a sigh of relief. Paradoxically SDI had served the country well; it had prevented a strategic arms debacle. So much for presidential free-wheeling without extended prior preparation.

One still shudders at the workings and the substance of the Reyjkavik summit. Why Shultz at this late date should feel obliged to defend it defies the imagination. With the passage of time, the absurdity of the American position becomes more evident. As a military system, in contrast to a mode of pressuring the Soviets, SDI can most charitably be described as a presidential "vision." There was then scant knowledge regarding possible technologies, potential costs, or anything other than slogans regarding its strategic role—though fortunately the Soviets did not realize how tentative that vision was. As of 1993—three years from when even the Soviets would have permitted deployment—we are still far from a workable system—and,

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perhaps regrettably, we have largely abandoned research for a space-based system. Ronald Reagan's grand vision of "ridding the world of nuclear weapons" seems as unachievable and as dangerous as ever. Why Shultz continues to labor in support of that will-o'-the-wisp remains a mystery.

Yet, despite the questioning of specific actions and policies, it remains indisputable that a combination of the times and Shultz's own strength of character made him one of our most successful secretaries of state. Many things he got right; some things he probably got wrong. Nonetheless, like the hedgehog of "The Hedgehog and the Fox" he "understood one great thing"—the fundamental change in U.S.-Soviet relations. He got that right and for that this nation will be forever in his debt. □

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Wrong on Japan

Karel van Wolferen

C. Fred Bergsten and Marcus Noland, *Reconcilable Differences?* (Washington: The Institute for International Economics, 1993). 296 pp., $19.95.

Daniel Burstein, *Turning the Tables: A Machiavellian Strategy for Dealing With Japan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993). 256 pp., $22.00.

Kent Calder, *Strategic Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). 280 pp., $35.00.

JAPAN IS without a doubt the most thoroughly, most widely, and most consistently misinterpreted major country in the world. This has just been confirmed for the umpteenth time in the ubiquitous media commentary about the Japanese public choosing a new political system that will cater to their interests as "consumers." Americans have long been told that in 1945 Japan was remade in the American image. Since the late 1950s they have read serious articles about a changing Japan, one beginning to resemble the United States even more closely. Thirty years ago Japan's youth no longer accepted the old ways and was remaking the country once again. Twenty years ago the consumers and grassroot activists were creating a more responsive politics. Seven years ago, the Japanese economy was going to be destroyed by its "death yen." Two years ago respected economic publications around the world were announcing the end to Japan's great economic performance, while Tokyo was busy building skyscrapers. Scandals have punctuated Japanese political life throughout the post-war period, each time prompting rampant and ignorant speculation about a Japan becoming more open, more democratic, and a more "responsible" member of the international community.

This misinterpretation is dangerous, for Japan is a very powerful country. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which Tokyo failed to establish by military conquest, is now becoming a reality as significant economic decisions for the countries in Southeast Asia are made by Japanese economic institutions. The United States and Japan together account for

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some 40 percent of the world's GNP, and how their troubled relationship eventually turns out will probably help determine what life is going to be like in the next century. Since continued blindness is likely to nullify future attempts at preventing diplomatic disaster, we need to ask why Westerners, especially Americans, cannot conceptually come to grips with Japan.

Ideology masquerading as science continues to be a major conceptual hindrance. Mainstream economists, and advocates of the Reagan/Thatcher world view, have taken Adam Smith one step further by postulating that liberty in economic pursuits is a necessary condition for economic success. This free-market ideology has recently been reinforced by two contradictory impulses: 1) It appears to have been vindicated by the demise of the command economies of Eastern Europe. 2) It is becoming more dogmatic and strident as secret fears that it may be false arouse the psychological urge to wall it off against evidence.

These fears are prompted by Japan. Simplified, the implied argument of the defenders of the faith goes: The Japanese *must* have organized their economic system according to free-market principles because they have been successful. If they haven't, this is scary, giving us ever more reason to insist that they have.

The staunchest defenders of this faith can be found filling the editorial pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. Let me try to place the *Journal's* considerable contribution to the misinterpretation of Japan in perspective with a story of an attempt to do something about it. On the 11th of March this year, the *Journal* ran a long article by Karl Zinsmeister, whose firsthand experience of Japanese economic reality can only have been severely limited. It presented the familiar notion that Japanese government bureaucrats, rather than having helped Japan's postwar economic development, actually hindered it. His points perfectly reflected the *Journal*'s position that if MITI officials and other bureaucrats had not meddled so much, Japan's businesses would be doing a lot better than they are now.

One of Tokyo's best informed foreign financial journalists, Eamonn Fingleton, decided to write a letter to the editor demonstrating that virtually every sentence in the article was a "misconception or an outright misstatement of facts." Fingleton absolved the author from blame, since he could "hardly be held accountable for error which he has absorbed in good faith from reading the *Journal*." A draft of the letter circulated among academics and journalists who know Japan—but hold diverse and often conflicting opinions—with the result that thirty-three wanted to add their signature to it. Among twenty-four academics who had the opportunity to join, only two declined. After about a month of negotiations, the *Journal* offered Fingleton two options: they would print the entire letter with only two signatures, or they would run all the signatures, but delete all but two paragraphs of the letter, thereby eliminating the substance of the critique.

An expanded version of Zinsmeister's article, entitled "MITI Mouse: Japan's Industrial Policy Doesn't Work," was published in the summer 1993 issue of the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, whose editor asked some experts on Japan, including myself, to contribute 300 words to get a debate going. I had visions of the editor of *Nature* sending letters to geographers, navigators, and astrophysicists soliciting their comments on the ongoing debate about whether the earth was round or flat.

In a good-humored and well-written response to the "Gang of 33" Zinsmeister reveals another great hindrance to getting things straight: The appraisal of the Japanese political economy has become hopelessly entangled in the altogether different discussion of whether or not the United States should have an industrial policy resembling Japan's. He refers to the signatories as "the officer corps of the industrial policy army," implies they are partisans for MITI, and appears to assume that they all believe that the Japanese bureaucratic way is a just way to conduct soci-

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ety. The free-market purists deceive themselves. They are not defending their way of life properly, as they think they are, by rejecting the notion that Japan could have built a powerful economy through making the market subservient to expansionary goals. Zinsmeister's response is shot through with assumptions he never examines. Every sentence, every clause, made me think that this man does not grasp that he is writing about an entirely different order of things than the one he knows from personal experience—that MITI, the Ministry of Finance, Japanese democracy, the Japanese "private sector" are entirely different species of institutions than their labels would suggest to Americans.

AS LONG AS the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Economist* (the second most steadfast free-market ideological beacon) set the tone of commentary on Japan in serious English language publications, we may not soon expect widespread enlightenment about its political economy. But in the meantime, businessmen and government officials who must deal with Japanese reality require something more than the irrelevant models that mainstream economists teach their students. This creates room for a new type of businessman: the entrepreneurial policy expert. "Japan experts" rent themselves out as consultants and advisors, and have produced scores of titles on both sides of the Pacific. Nothing comparable to this kind of literature exists on any other country in the world.

The latest prominent example is Daniel Burstein. We need to know the motives of those who inform us on complex matters we cannot witness directly ourselves. What to think of someone who in 1978, after a trip to Cambodia, could claim that the stories about atrocities and forced labor under the Khmer Rouge were fabrications: the product of a "massive propaganda" effort by the CIA?[1] This was three years after the forced evacuation of Phnom Penh, when all but a handful of apologists for Pol Pot had been silenced by the tales of hordes of refugees. Was Burstein blind when he was a guest of the Khmer Rouge? Did he care?

The entrepreneurial Burstein made the lucrative discovery in the mid-1980s that an important force in the global economy—the Japanese financial system—had been all but ignored in publications for a general audience, and he wrote *Yen!*. This book, without ever explaining what made Japanese financing the force it is, at least pointed out that the phenomenon existed. But Burstein's political and financial interests have changed. Since his editorship of the Chicago-based communist newspaper *The Call*, and since writing *Yen!*, he has become the public relations advisor and ghost writer of Peter G. Peterson, head of the Blackstone Group, whose biggest funder is the Japanese firm Nikko Securities. Burstein's new patrons are revealed in the jarring tone of *Turning the Tables: A Machiavellian Strategy for Dealing with Japan*, whose message, if it has one at all, is tantamount to: if you are being raped anyhow, you may as well lie back and enjoy it.

Burstein knows that the earth is not flat. He has talked with people like Kenneth Courtis of Deutsche Bank, who have set him straight on the "collapse" of the Japanese economy. But as I tried to get through *Turning the Tables* (not an easy task because it is not so much a book as a disjointed paste job of half digested bits of information), I never glimpsed what shape Japan has taken in Burstein's mind. At no point did I have the sense that he had sat down for a moment and made everything he knew about it come together to form a coherent picture.

If he has an inkling of the political reality underlying Japanese economic developments, he is smothering it under prose aimed at pleasing his market. Much of it is reworked propaganda from Japan's professional foreigner-handlers. He seems to grasp that the "bubble economy" of the second half of the 1980s was managed for the purpose of supplying large Japanese companies with virtually costless capi-

[1] *New York Times*, May 12, 1978.

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tal. But he does not seem to understand how this crucial given relates to the subjects he touches on. He doesn't seem to understand the role of the Ministry of Finance. He does not even know why foreign cars imported into Japan generally have the steering wheel on the wrong side (not because of lazy manufacturers, but because there has hardly been a market for those with the wheel on the right side—the Germans and Swedes have long debated this question, and decided it was to their advantage to keep the wheel on the "wrong" side). He tells American negotiators to concentrate on things that are simply not negotiable in the Japanese context. And he thinks that it is possible for United States companies to integrate into *keiretsu* (Japan's gigantic corporate groupings) as partners and suppliers.

When Burstein comes to the mandatory policy suggestions, his writing turns downright silly. Reminiscent of those who have advocated the establishment of a world government for preventing all future wars, Burstein calls for a Trans-Pacific Community, "launched at the initiative of the U.S. president and the Japanese prime minister, chartered by both the U.S. Congress and the Japanese Diet, presided over by a binary executive body, with shared policy-making and enforcement institutions." One wonders how this executive body is going to deal with Japan's Ministry of Finance. Japan's cabinet and parliament have never been able to manage that.

It is worth dwelling on this. The book is reviewed in *Foreign Affairs* as the most important in five years on the Japan-United States relationship. Blackstone's Peterson may be Burstein's sponsor, but he is also chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, and if he can describe the book as one "that will forever change the nature of the Japan debate" with a straight face, and get away with it, it is time to wonder if there are any standards left anywhere.

Burstein's assertions cater to a constituency that wants to hear them: things are changing in ways that will make it easier for the United States to deal with Japan. The initiatives for change are coming from Japan's private sector. Let's tie up with these dynamos. They also fit in with what Robert Reich at the Labor Department keeps repeating: Who is US? Let them come! They will bring jobs!

Proof of change initiated by Japan's private sector is found in the proposals that Akio Morita of Sony makes for changing Japanese business practices. Burstein has ghost-written some of Morita's articles in English, including the one published by the *Atlantic Monthly* earlier this year. It should be understood that this cosmopolitan and, in the United States, very popular Japanese businessman is nowhere near the moving force in Japanese industry that he has been made out to be in many publications. There are, no doubt, certain advantages to having Japanese investors in the United States. But one needs to know that they are not capitalists of the kind Americans are used to, and that Morita's recommendations have been received with a fair amount of ridicule in Japan. Japanese investors are much less interested in profits than in economic territory. They rarely come alone, as they are always connected to the colossal system of Japanese economic institutions, the power and the dynamics of which America's policy makers only dimly perceive, and about which they are systematically misled by the likes of Burstein and Peterson.

The quintessential entrepreneur in the eerie market of Washington policy expertise is C. Fred Bergsten. His panacea has been currency realignment. For many years Bergsten has been the most visible advocate for devaluing the dollar as a solution to all of America's problems with Japan. Considering some twenty years of overwhelming evidence that this has not only not been a solution, but has been very counterproductive, it is a mystery that he is still taken seriously. Because the entrepreneurial policy expert must, first of all, keep an eye on his market, and the new idea market under Clinton seems to go for limited government activism in international trade, Bergsten has now guardedly come out as the co-author of a densely written book saying that there is more

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to problems with Japan than the free-market (with re-aligned currencies) can solve. Sorry Fred, it's too late. Your statistics and charts don't tell much of a new story, and they don't begin to fathom the depth of the bilateral problems.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL policy "experts" pursue a business, and one is prepared for the fact that their souls are not absorbed by the search for truth. That is supposed to be the pursuit of the academic community. But alas, the widespread lament that university scholarship is about hierarchical position and funding before it is about truth is particularly pertinent where it concerns studies of the Japanese political and economic systems.

It is therefore sad to see a Japan specialist, Kent Calder, not only failing to deliver on earlier promise, but also, evidently, pursuing academic politics through shoddy scholarship. This young tenured professor at Princeton did not exactly write: "I am going to set you up, Chalmers Johnson, in such a way that I can knock you down and take your place as the leading theorist on the Japanese political economy." But if he had, this would hardly have made his intention clearer. Calder leaves no doubt in the early pages of *Strategic Capitalism* that the model of the Capitalist Developmental State constructed by Chalmers Johnson deserves demolishing and that his own frontal attack will do the job.

One sits down expectantly, for an exhilarating intellectual experience. Johnson, after all, has been just about the only original thinker of his generation in a field populated by intellectual light-weights. And his book on MITI, demonstrating the pre-war/wartime/postwar continuity of virtually unchanged bureaucratic power in Japan, has more than any other work confronted Japanologists and mainstream economists with the need to reconsider their rather complacent assumptions concerning the forces propelling the "Japanese miracle."[2]

But Calder does not deliver. He relies on the distinction between "strategists" (Johnson's MITI officials) and "regulators," without clearly spelling out what sets of activities distinguish them. Again and again, as he promises yet another piece of evidence of "strategic" weakness, and makes you think now it comes, you get something that could easily be explained in another way, or seems hardly relevant. As he was enumerating bureaucratic setbacks, and internal rivalries, pointing out *ad infinitum ad nauseam* that political, or "conservative," or whatever other interests won out rather than "strategic" interests, I kept thinking: when is he going to tell me something new, something I did not know, and for that matter, something that also Chalmers Johnson has not already thought of?

The activity Calder focuses on to prove his point is industrial credit allocation. He shows that this has mainly been determined by a conservative group of private sector financiers and their government regulators, rather than by government industrial strategists. He talks constantly of industrial "transformation," and posits a conservative financial bureaucracy as inherently wary of such transformation. All this sounds plausible enough to people who are unaware of what goes on in Japan. But for those who know as much about the Japanese political economy as I had thought Calder knew, it is unconvincing on three counts.

The easiest to deal with is the assumption that Japan's industrial "strategy" entails industrial "transformation." Why should it? Japanese economic interests have been engaged, first and foremost, in industrial expansion. Since 1945 this has been the unquestioned national goal, to which practically all other major endeavors were made subservient. Calder's picture of a conservative bureaucracy, with a "strong bias toward status-quo policy patterns," is correct. Like all bureaucrats, those of Japan prefer things to stay the way they are. But the status quo in Japan *is* unlimited expansion of productive

[2]Chalmers Johnson, *MITI And The Japanese Miracle* (Palo Alto, 1982).

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capacity. This purpose is meaningful to both the government and the business bureaucracies. As one of Japan's most astute observers of the Ministry of Finance, Akio Mikuni puts it: "these administrators never again want to be short of productive capacity as they were in 1945. They have all these postwar years been running what is essentially a war economy."

A bit more difficult to fathom is the fact that Japan's Ministry of Finance officials are not "regulators" in the accepted meaning of the term. A regulator is someone implementing regulations that are transparent and subject to external review. Regulators are accountable to higher bodies in a political economy. Japan's Ministry of Finance makes the regulations it implements, need not be explicit about them, is not accountable to a higher body, and can change its interpretation of the regulations at its own discretion to fit its current aims—its "strategy," if you will.

The much less "conservative," because innovative, Ministry of International Trade and Industry once harnessed Japan's companies to the main national goal of unlimited industrial expansion, with a multitude of formal regulations and informal directives administered at its discretion. During the period covered by Johnson's famous book, the two government agencies worked mostly in tandem. But as Johnson aptly pointed out, MITI was so successful that it could be compared to a poverty agency that actually succeeded in wiping out poverty, making itself almost superfluous. And, certainly, plenty of conflicting intermediate motives appeared in the course of administering their bailiwicks, which caused the ministries to quarrel occasionally, but that does not invalidate the developmental theory Calder is trying to demolish.

To score points against Johnson's "Developmental State Model," Calder extends the arguments used in the MITI book, and presents a very naive and simplified picture of the theory. Direct government funding, for instance, was never a decisive factor, as opposed to unambiguous indications which sector areas had been earmarked for development (which amounts to indirect allocation of capital). Calder is so intent on disproving Johnson that repeatedly he undermines his credibility by overplaying his hand. And the supposedly scholarly treatment of his subject is at crucial junctures fatally impoverished by such assurances as: "more than many think," "another way of looking at it," "less than is generally thought."

Calder misses subtleties concerning "regulatory" and "developmental" activity. For the word "regulatory" to retain any meaning at all, it must imply a political order in which disinterested regulatory officials are charged with safeguarding the integrity of economic activity. This excludes all activity aimed at creating specific economic outcomes. But developmental officials are obsessed with outcomes, while they know that one needs to guard against things going out of kilter, which has been a constant Japanese problem as a result of forced industrial development. Of course, the Ministry of Finance wants to "regulate" for order. This is essential to the success of its "developmental" policies.

Calder's most important message for the larger American audience is that Japan's baffling economic success is, after all, the work of the private sector. We can breathe more easily again. The bureaucracy had much less to do with it than people were beginning to think recently. This is a godsend for those who share the illusions of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Economist*. And it would all be wonderful were it not for the fact that in Japan the private sector does not exist—not a private sector as we know it. When Calder writes on the first page of Chapter One about "A richly organized private society as counterpoint to the state...," and twenty-four pages later "institutionally speaking, the role of the private sector in the Japanese economy was thus prior to that of the state," he is speaking the language of Rational Choice theorists, but using a label that carries with it a host of connotations that anyone more than superficially acquainted with the Japanese political economy knows to be invalid.

The Industrial Bank of Japan, which fig-

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ures prominently in Calder's book, cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered a private sector institution. (It was created as a government bank in 1902 and "privatized" in 1952). Neither can the large *keiretsu* banks or the large corporations. They are not like banks and companies in the United States, in their operating methods or incentive structure. Profit-making is not the ultimate consideration underlying their transactions and relationships. They are bureaucratic entities ensconced in an informal, protective, power structure, which has eliminated the risk of large bankruptcies. The combination of two institutional innovations, the *keiretsu* systems, and the industrial associations in every sector, has effectively erased the division between private and governmental sectors.

Using Calder's model one could not begin to explain what happened during the "bubble economy" and its deflation. Crucial for understanding Japan's postwar industrial success is to grasp the ways in which the administrators have been able to create money out of nothing: first with "overloan," in the 1950s and 1960s, second during the "bubble economy" years. Neither would have been possible with clearly delineated and differentiated private and public sectors. The officials at the Ministry of Finance have been eminently "strategic," as they presided over a deflation these past three years, which in a country with a genuine private sector would have wiped out most of the banks and many large companies. Calder's main argument, supporting his entire book, collapses the moment one understands that Japanese government bureaucrats abdicated day-to-day regulatory control of industrial-credit decisions to what are essentially their colleagues in the very well-organized business bureaucracy.

It will be interesting to see how far this book will be allowed to set the terms of future discussion, as it comes in very handy for an army of wishful thinkers. It appears tailor-made for the approbation of Japanese administrators, as it confirms the latest propaganda line out of Tokyo: "There was a time that bureaucrats were important, but now we do everything with the private sector." This also means that Princeton's Japan study programs will be favored by those who administer the plenty of Japanese funding, which is an important consideration when students decide where to go. As long as the field continues to attract a lot of mediocre students, Calder may well rule the roost of young scholars who make sure to steer away from the controversy that is the inevitable byproduct of attempts to make Americans come to terms conceptually with Japan.

IT IS NOT all hopeless in academia. Three good recent books have begun to deal with some of the fundamental errors that prevail, in popular assessments of where Japan is heading, where it is, and has been, in its economic relations with the United States. Mark Mason's *American Multinationals in Japan*[3] demonstrates how from 1899 through 1980 (where his study ends) a very systematic effort has blocked American investments in Japan, and punctures the common popular theory that foreign industries haven't tried hard enough, or that it has been a matter of competitiveness. Dennis Encarnations's *Rivals Beyond Trade: America Versus Japan in Global Competition*[4] gives a superior account of how Japan's long-term investment strategy is the ultimate cause of the persistent trade imbalance. Michael Gerlach's *Alliance Capitalism*[5] is an exhaustive treatment of the *keiretsu* system, and invaluable as a very detailed analysis and taxonomy of the variety of relations of Japanese business organizations. Although meant for an academic audience, all foreigners involved with Japanese business will benefit

[3]Mark Mason, *American Multinationals and Japan: The Political Economy of Japanese Capital Controls 1899-1980* (Cambridge, MA, 1993).

[4]Dennis Encarnation, *Rivals Beyond Trade: America Versus Japan in Global Competition* (Ithaca: 1993).

[5]Michael L. Gerlach, *Alliance Capitalism: The Social Organization of Japanese Business* (Berkeley, 1992).

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from this antidote to some popular assumptions—for instance, that the *keiretsu* system is about to break down.

Yet, while these are valuable books, by concentrating on the "private sector," without clearly qualifying what this means in the Japanese context, they leave very much unsaid. I regret that none of these three academic authors has had the daring to use the high vantage point of his own findings as a platform for the conceptual leap that must be made in order to offer perspectives on the fundamental question in the Japanese political economy—the relationship of the quasi private and public sectors. Encarnation, who provides an excellent overview of the dominant theories, comes closest to dealing with it by carefully differentiating Japanese "oligopolists" from American multinationals. But Mason emphasizes that it has been the private sector that pressured the bureaucrats to create barriers blocking foreign access to the Japanese market, and leaves it at that. Gerlach overlooks important political motives that help determine the social organization of Japanese business he enumerates so well, as well as the fact that this social context has a political component of coercion.

As young academics without tenure they may not have had much of a choice. Much "social science" as currently practiced literally forces numerous authors of PhD dissertations to start from erroneous premises—such as the existence of a Japanese private sector, comparable to those in the West—if they want to avoid giving the impression of having been "unscientific."

A satisfying, and generally accepted, overall theoretical scheme in which to fit Japan will probably not emerge until economic theory is re-integrated with political philosophy. Studies like those of Encarnation, Mason, and Gerlach, should be placed in a much larger context that takes into full consideration the crucial questions of accountability, the Japanese legal order, and the interplay of formal and informal power. Large Japanese companies are important social control institutions, besides being producers of goods and services. Collectively they have neutralized the Japanese middle class as a political force. What passes for public opinion is manufactured by the five large daily newspapers, which form a monolithic entity effectively allied with the economic and social control bureaucrats. In its totality this is a magnificent edifice. The easiest way to begin grasping its nature is to imagine a communist system that actually works, one based not on secret police coercion, but on generations of conditioning by socially sanctioned, pervasive intimidation; one kept in place by an effective ideology of Japanese identity, which postulates an innate social harmony among the Japanese people, supporting bureaucratic authoritarianism.

If one can stretch the meaning of capitalism to accommodate Japanese reality, one could, with equal plausibility, stretch the meaning of communism to do the same. If this sounds like a smear on Japanese society, that is not my purpose. It is one way of beginning to grasp how Japanese power is organized, and how—largely through informal methods—civil society is suppressed. Over the years I have had Hungarians, Poles, and Czechs living in Japan tell me that the politicization of Japanese life was much more thorough than what they had been used to at home.

It is difficult to imagine Americans accepting that their "most important ally in the Pacific," the partner in the "most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none," has actually been, all this time, the world's most successful communist state. But if there is to be gradual awakening concerning the nature of the Japanese political economy, one can only hope for more scholarship to develop outside the social science theocracies of the American universities, unfettered by the very inhibiting peer review system, and unhindered by funds guaranteeing orthodoxy. □

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Russia's Extreme Right

Paul A. Goble

Walter Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993). 318 pp., $27.50

RUSSIAN NATIONALISM is the most important but least understood force to have emerged from the shadows following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is the most important because it increasingly defines Moscow's domestic and foreign policies. But it is the least understood both because of the peculiar history of relations between the Russian state and its people and because of the particular way scholars have studied this phenomenon. Consequently, we can only welcome Walter Laqueur' s chilling survey of its more extreme forms, forms all the more disturbing because their impact now extends not only to other Russian nationalists but to many Russians who would deny that they are nationalists at all.

Seldom has Russian nationalism been lucky in either its history or its historians. Prior to the Bolshevik revolution, the Russian state and the Russian nation developed along lines very different from those in both Western and Eastern Europe. First, the Russian state became an empire long before the Russian people consolidated as a nation, leaving more open than elsewhere the boundaries—both physical and psychological—of Russian identity and forcing Russians to subordinate their identities to a larger collectivity. Second, the Russian state largely preempted nationalism as an issue, thereby bureaucratizing the concept and all too often forcing the intelligentsia into opposition rather than allowing it the opportunity to be a leavening force. Third, Russia did not pass through some of the key experiences that helped shape national identity and nationalism elsewhere. It did not experience directly the Renaissance or Reformation and its contact with the Enlightenment was highly filtered by the state. And its economic development did not produce a middle class that could serve as both a carrier and moderating influence on nationalist thought.

Each of these was exacerbated by the policies of the Soviet state. The Soviet state preserved the empire but treated the Russians and non-Russians in different and profoundly affecting ways. By failing to give the Russians their own state—the RSFSR was never viewed as truly a Russian entity—and treating the Russians alone as deserving of extraterritorial rights, the Soviet state thought it was binding the Russian core to it. In fact, it was further truncating the development of Russian identity and Russian nationalism and sowing the seeds that have produced many of the weeds that Professor Laqueur describes with such elegance. The Soviet state also sought to coopt nationalism, being far more willing to incorporate non-threatening Russian nationalist ideas than to absorb democratic ones. And again, like its czarist predecessor but until near the end far more effectively, the Soviet authorities sought to isolate the Soviet population from broader social developments and to prevent the emergence of social groups that might be the bearers of challenges to itself.

Each aspect of this pattern was subjected to a sudden and curious inversion by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. For the first time, the nation was both more powerful and more active than the state itself. Because the Russian Federation is not

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the Soviet Union, Russians suffered the trauma of the loss of empire; because it is not Russia—25 million Russians remain outside its borders and 30 million non-Russians remain inside them—they again faced the prospect of self-definition. This time, the state was too weak to preempt nationalism as had the czarist and Soviet states in the past. The weakness of the Russian state and its interest in cooperation with the West dictated a different course, thus leaving the population adrift without any clear set of values.

Indeed, most of the old values had become discredited; and in some cases, there had been an inversion of values, with anything the Soviets denounced looking good for that reason alone. The state was not able to prevent the sudden and uncontrolled influx of all sorts of ideas nor to prosecute reforms quickly enough to produce a new class of supporters even as the old structures were destroyed. All three of these factors helped to define the extremist nationalism that Professor Laqueur has chosen to describe.

Russian nationalism has been even more unfortunate in its historians than its history. The reasons are not far to seek. First, most students of the subject have focused on its more extreme and colorful aspects and confused them with the totality of national assertiveness. This tendency flows from the fact that Russian nationalism is the nationalism of a dominant nation. In Soviet times, for example, if an Uzbek built a mosque, he was a nationalist; but if a Russian built a church, he was religious. Consequently, students of Uzbek nationalism included within that term a broad range of phenomena, whereas students of Russian nationalism tended to include only those—usually extreme groups—who described themselves or were described by others as nationalist, thus distorting the true picture of nationalism in that community.

Second, because the Soviet state and its czarist predecessor were so authoritarian and did not provide the opportunities for using polls or other means of assessing the relative strength of groups, students of Russian nationalism have tended to present the spectrum of Russian thinking in ways that suggest virtually every portion of this spectrum is equally important, again distorting reality and overstating the importance of highly visible and mediagenic groups. And third, because Russian nationalism is a powerful force in a powerful country, most students of the subject have been more interested in evaluating it than in analyzing it, with most denouncing it as an evil force and others defending it as the necessary response to Russian conditions or even a positive contribution to world civilization.

To a certain extent, Walter Laqueur falls into each of these traps, but with his usual ability, he transcends them as well. He tends to describe the actions of the non-Russians as nationalist *tout court* while carefully restricting his use of that designation when talking about Russians; but he saves his book by carefully limiting himself to what he calls "the Russian extreme right" rather than attempting to discuss all of Russian nationalism. He also relies almost exclusively on literary evidence but carefully sprinkles his text with warnings about generalizing from the writings of only one or another group. And he spends a great deal of time denouncing what he and all decent people must see as the dangerous aspects of his subject, even as he provides an analysis of the problem usually far deeper than those of many of his colleagues in this field.

Laqueur's book provides a useful history of extremist nationalist ideas in the imperial and Soviet periods, a rogues gallery of the far right spokesmen who emerged in Russia under Gorbachev, and the right-wing politicians and activists who now play an increasingly important role in Russian life. In each case, he is using often obscure sources—his bibliographic guide at

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the end of the book is likely to be one of its most useful features—and as a result, he makes some specific factual errors which specialists will criticize him for. But to concentrate on these is both a mistake—they are not fundamental—and unfair to Laqueur's accomplishment: highlighting the underlying patterns of thought of these extremist groups which set them apart from both moderates at home and nationalists elsewhere.

Laqueur divides the Russian extremists from the Russian moderates in the following way. The extremists, he writes, are "those who seek the cause of Russia's misfortunes entirely in the machinations and intrigues of foreign and domestic enemies;" the moderates, on the other hand, consist of people "willing to engage in introspection, self-criticism, and, where called for, penitence." A similar, if equally diffuse line, divides extremists and moderates in other countries. But Laqueur argues—and I believe convincingly—that the extreme right of Russian nationalism has certain features that set it apart from other national extremists elsewhere.

Flowing from the history outlined above, these features include:

—a paranoid style that sees enemies everywhere and invents them even when they do not exist,

—a passionate belief in conspiracies—Judeo-Masonic, Russophobe, and otherwise—directed against Russians, conspiracies so strong that Russia is always the victim rather than an independent actor; and

—a set of ideas which in other countries would be confined to the lunatic fringe but which, because Russia lacks the established social channels found elsewhere, have spread more broadly.

It is this last point that is especially important. All countries have their lunatic right-wing and left-wing fringe groups, but in most of them, these groups remain just that. What is it about Russia now that gives these groups a broader influence? Laqueur's catalogue is frightening:

> ...the feeling of national humiliation following the breakup of the Soviet Union; the need to pursue an assertive policy vis-a-vis the former republics in view of Russian interests and the presence of many millions of Russians abroad; the bad economic situation and the need to engage in unpopular reforms; the frequent impotence of the authorities in the face of a breakdown of law and order; the fact that democratic institutions are not deeply rooted in Russia; the traditional psychological need for a strong hand; the old Weimar dilemma of how to run a democracy in the absence of a sufficient number of democrats; the deep divisions on the left.

BUT STILL, AS he points out, even this garden will not necessarily allow the dangerous weeds he has identified to take over the entire plot. Where are we to look?

The answer is to be found in what is probably the most serious but superficial criticism one could make of Laqueur's study: namely, he fails to define with precision the limits of his subject. Part of the reason for this is the old Wittgenstein dictum that a precise definition of a fuzzy concept is necessarily fuzzy, but a more important part of it is that there is no sharp line between what Laqueur has called the extreme right and the more moderate Russian nationalists and even some of the democrats.

Many of the arguments of the extreme right touch a far broader nerve, as Professor Laqueur demonstrates when he repeats them, not to criticize but rather to agree (e.g., his assertion that "There never was a Byelorussian nation nor is there an 'objective need' for one now" would please even the most right-wing Russian nationalist, as would his repeated expressions of regret about the end of the Soviet Union and his suggestions that Russians are being driven from their homes in Lithuania). But most

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importantly, in this time of uncertainty, trauma, and extreme hardship, the extreme right has three bridge issues into the very center and even left of the Russian political spectrum:

First, the issue of Russia's status as a great power. Both elites and masses feel that Russia is being treated as some kind of second-class beggar, as a country that is no longer important. As a result, there is a growing desire to strike out both to demonstrate their independence from the West and to prove to themselves that they still have the ability to act as a great power. It is probably no accident that the idea of a "good little war" (the Russo-Japanese War) was pioneered in Russia at a time of difficulty; it helps explain the attractiveness for many in Russia of Moscow's current pressure on the non-Russian states. As Laqueur himself notes, "it would have been suicidal for the Russian democrats to leave patriotism and the defense of national interests to the right." What he does not say is that by adopting the right's program in these areas, the democrats in fundamental ways cease to be what they claim and become what they deny.

A second rightist issue with broad appeal is the question of the status of Russians abroad. Closely related to the issue of Russia's status, and indeed a polite way of talking about it, is the current uproar about supposed massive mistreatment of ethnic Russians in the non-Russian countries. That there are real problems no one would deny, but that the Russian right—or in some cases even liberal democrats like Professor Laqueur—are correct in their descriptions no one should accept. Indeed, the failure to challenge Russian claims on this point is already leading to Russian policies that could make this claim into a self-fulfilling prophecy. If Moscow seeks to offer its "protection" to Russians abroad, that offer in itself tends to make the regularization of the status of these groups more, not less problematic.

A third pattern with appeal beyond the right is the tendency to blame others. Professor Laqueur sees this as a characteristic of the extreme right. I would argue that it typifies most of Russian political discourse from one end of the spectrum to the other. Those who are truly prepared to be penitent—one part of Laqueur's own definition of moderate—are rare. One thinks of Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, and only a few others. Overwhelmingly, Russian political figures of all stripes blame others for their problems: the Soviet past, the non-Russians, and the West for failing to help or helping in the wrong way, to name but three. This is a long way from blaming imaginary conspiracies of Jews and Masons, but the impulse to avoid responsibility is all too similar and offers a bridge to the right that as it has become more "respectable," may make it possible for the right to either come to power on its own or more likely to increasingly define the agendas of those who deny that they are nationalists at all. In short, a rightist policy by leftist hands, just as at the end of the Gorbachev era.

None of this is inevitable. In each case, there are reasons to believe that this awful end can be avoided. But it will require thoughtful and forceful actions by Russians and the West as well. The most dangerous thing about a study like Laqueur's is that it could convince people that either these extremists are totally irrelevant or that they represent all that Russian nationalism is. Both views are wrong, and both contribute to inaction. Fortunately, Professor Laqueur, as so often in the past, has not only pointed to a danger but—even more importantly—indicated that it remains within the realm of moral choice, and that both we and the Russians must take responsibility lest new horrors be loosed upon the world. □

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Gauche and Sinister

Anthony Hartley

Olivier Bernier, *Fireworks at Dusk: Paris in the Thirties* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1993). 351 pp., $24.95.
Tony Judt, *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 1944-1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). 319 pp., $30.00.

FRANCE AND Frenchmen, it may be said with some confidence, are incomprehensible for anyone insufficiently aware of their intellectual traditions. Those traditions, embodied in the works of great writers, are one of the glories of European civilization. From Montaigne onwards runs the line of brilliant moralists, whose concentration on the behavior of individuals in society enlarged the knowledge of human nature, laid the foundation for the achievements of a Balzac or a Stendhal, but also provided rather inadequate generalizations concerning the character of those who dined only intermittently at the top table of French culture. The importance for France of the development, during three centuries, of a classically clear and analytically subtle use of language to communicate ideas both within and outside the country cannot be overestimated. For more than two centuries French writers, painters, and architects made European culture, and the consciousness of this *rayonnement de la culture française* has remained to this day and explains the exaggerated and sometimes ludicrous importance attached to the spread of *francophonie*.

This consciousness of cultural mission affected French writers, giving them a comforting idea of their own importance. For their message was not restricted to purely aesthetic impressions. From the *philosophes* of the eighteenth century emerged an intellectual caste, which saw its role as that of a kind of lay clergy, censoring or applauding the behavior of the world at large, defending the persecuted and denouncing the powerful. From 1789 onwards, they were carried into passionate partisanship by the Revolution and the myths and ideologies it spawned. It follows that the "intellectual" and his significance for society are understood differently in France from what is the case in other countries, though there is some relationship to the "intelligentsia" that developed in Russia.[1] French intellectuals, however, were neither nihilists nor "superfluous men," but part of a cultivated and prosperous bourgeoisie, supplying their fellow citizens with ideas and striving to provide those elements of idealism that would elevate them above the mere pursuit of material wealth. It was no accident that the historian Ernest Renan, considering the disaster of the Franco-Prussian war, should have entitled his great essay "The Intellectual and Moral Reform of France."

But their contribution had its limits. After 1918 the intellectuals were as exhausted as the failing Third Republic, about whose ills they had little to say that was relevant. Old ideological quarrels—soon to be renewed by the foreign examples of communism and fascism—were pursued with diminishing vigor and increasingly stale phrases. Some intellectuals departed into a dream world, which they

[1]The fortune of the word *Intellectuel*, used as a noun, seems to have been made by the Dreyfus case. The 1876 edition of *Littré* does not mention this usage. In Britain the substantive only appears in 1884: "a dinner of intellectuals."

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valued for its power to entrance or to shock. Few drew attention to the real problems of France: its economic condition, the changes wrought by new technology or the modernization of what still remained a Napoleonic state administration. Throughout the Thirties, French industry was crucified on Poincaré's "strong franc." From 1930 onwards production sank and only regained growth in the Fifties under the influence of industrial modernization advocated and carried out by Jean Monnet. After 1955, France's economic success was to be carried forward by technocrats and the new academic race of "énarques" (graduates of the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration*). The traditional intellectual class had little to do with it.

Olivier Bernier's book is hardly an adequate account of the decline of the Third Republic. It is, in fact, something of an "Oh! là, là" view of these years. First nights, vernissages, dress shows, and incessant parties form the background. Political intrigue and scandal go on to the soft, delicious sound of society hostesses hitting the mattress with this week's lover. Against this glittering background scurried the dark and doomed figures of the politicians, occupied with the incessant formation of governments, whose shifting majorities ensured that they achieved little. Paris and Parisian fashion were still a huge success, a "caravan-serai for the noble foreigner," as Péguy, a Catholic poet and a French nationalist, put it, but what of France?

The men of the Third Republic were hardly capable of dealing with the problems history had left them. They thought much about the "blue line" of the Vosges, but they could not match either Germany's birthrate or its industrial strength, and the Russian revolution had destroyed the European balance of power. Attempts to redress it through diplomatic expedients such as the Little Entente were to prove useless. The tragedy was that many of France's political leaders were intelligent and honorable men. Léon Blum and Paul Reynaud were both patriotic and, to some extent, clear-sighted politicians. They did their best with France—Reynaud was the one finance minister who, just before 1939, managed to reverse the stagnation of industrial production—but they could not make it into a modern country (37 percent of the work force were still engaged in agriculture in 1938). The "popular front" government, headed by Blum, was undermined by its own economic ignorance, as the introduction of the forty-hour week increased the decline of French industry. (Keynes was only translated during the war and it took some years after that for his theories to become familiar to French officials). In the late Thirties even the right-wing extremists of the day looked backwards to old controversies. There were individuals who might be called fascist, but there was no mass totalitarian movement. As René Rémond has pointed out, French society was too traditional, unemployment too modest, to provide material for the kind of explosion that brought the Nazis to power in Germany. The nearest the "Leagues"—the small right-wing groups that proliferated in the 1930s—came to a genuinely totalitarian party was Jacques Doriot's *Parti Populaire Français* (PPF).

The Paris of fashion shows and first nights continued on after 1940 under the German occupation, as a sort of gruesome parody of itself, as anyone can see who cares to read Ernst Jünger's diaries of the time. Blum and Reynaud were in prison awaiting their trial at Riom. Meanwhile the world of the intellectuals had changed. The ideological disputes became fiercer and the stakes higher. By the end of the war the small band of writers committed to a German victory were disillusioned and dispersed. The literary critic Brasillach was executed; Drieu La Rochelle, the novelist, committed suicide; the greater writer Céline fled to Denmark. Those who had joined the Resistance or simply opposed Vichy and the occupier, on the other hand, were pushed further to the Left, living under the shadow of what seemed the most uncompromising left-wing force avail-

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able: France's Communist Party. The years after 1945 were dominated by a well-worn political recipe: no enemies on the Left.

TONY JUDT'S book *Past Imperfect* is a subtle and well-written account of the intellectual débacle which resulted from this situation. During the ten years or so when intellectual fashion was dominated by Sartre and his allies, many a French writer ended up in the dead end of Marxist dialectic with all that this implied in the way of sophistry and polemical brutality—but also of tedium and loss of spontaneity. As it became clear that the post-war world would be divided into two camps, France's left-wing intellectuals tried to perceive some "third way"—the most notable attempt being that of the Catholic philosopher Étienne Gilson. Meanwhile, however, the balance was held unequally between the two superpowers. Excuses were made for the Soviet Union, as disturbing stories percolated back from Eastern Europe—were not the Moscow trials, after all, simply an instance of the revolutionary justice France had known under the Jacobins?—but no such indulgence was displayed towards the United States. Not only was it unashamedly capitalist, but it was also engaged in the cultural ruin of France—"Cocacolonisation" in a brilliantly polemical phrase. In 1952 an editorialist in the left-wing Catholic review *Esprit* wrote:

> From the outset we have denounced in these pages the risk posed to our country by an American culture that attacks at their roots the originality, the mental and moral cohesion of Europe.

Some curious facts were adduced to support this conclusion, American consumption of aspirin being cited to show how unfit the United States was for world leadership! Oddly enough, left-wing Catholic intellectuals were, if anything, rather more viscerally hostile to America than the communists themselves—presumably because they entertained that residual longing for a hierarchical rural society which had made them for a short period support Pétain and the Vichy government.

To exculpate Soviet communism, to justify ignoring the best-selling Kravchenko (*I Chose Freedom*) and David Rousset's revelations about what was not yet called "the Gulag," every kind of excuse was made. The French working class must not be disillusioned; "Billancourt must not be driven to despair," as Sartre wrote of the famous working class suburb of Paris. In any case, nothing could be done about Eastern Europe, so why not direct one's protests to injustices nearer to home?[2] Moreover, to "betray" Soviet communism would give comfort to "reactionaries," "ex-collaborators," and "men of Vichy," who were even now raising their heads again. Also, after the searing events of the war, there was a taste among French intellectuals for violence and the short shrift meted out by revolutionary tribunals. Emmanuel Mounier, the editor of *Esprit* and the acknowledged guru of this left-wing Catholic movement, wrote about communist show trials, quoting Andrei Vyshinski with approval: "The psychology of the accused, his personal destiny pale before the collective destiny, because at the moment the latter is facing life or death."

This is a return to Saint-Just—"Those who attach any importance to the just death of a King will never found a Republic"—but it is nonetheless deeply shocking. Mounier and his disciples, after all, proclaimed themselves Christians for whom individual lives and souls should matter. Judt's account of disbelief in, and indifference to, what was going on in Russia and Eastern Europe is especially damaging for the *Esprit* movement. No wonder that publication of the book's French edition has

[2]This argument was often to be found also in the columns of the London *New Statesman* under the editorship of Kingsley Martin.

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excited anguished protests.[3]

But the damage done to the judgment and reputation of those non-Communist French intellectuals, who were fascinated by the Party and thrilled to feel that Marxist history was on their side (or that they were on its!), went further than the practice of moral double-dealing. As the Fifties progressed, the most constant topic of intellectual debate appeared to be the minute nuances of the attitude to be adopted by writers or artists towards events in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. A pattern was established which repeated itself with monotonous regularity. As the debate grumbled on, some event would stand out—rebellion in Budapest, a trial in Prague—which could be used as the occasion for "taking a stand" or "clarifying one's position." Then intellectuals, with a shudder of pleasure, could don the garment of penitence or the armor of dialectical apology. Mouths that had remained closed could be opened to make the grand gesture of admitting some measure of the truth. Others could confess/assert their lasting fidelity to the Party and the Soviet Union.

What a bore these constant posturings and apologias were! In their narrow, but not uncomfortable, world, French intellectuals indulged themselves in days and nights of discussion, whose phrases became increasingly divorced from what was going on in the world outside. If Marxism, as Raymond Aron suggested, was the "opium" of the intellectuals, then it is not surprising that the doings of its addicts failed to grip those outside the den. Drug addicts are notoriously boring to the world outside their obsession. The penalty for such self-indulgence was to become less and less relevant to a France, where economic prosperity was growing and bringing about social changes unforeseen by Marxist theory. The left-wing intellectuals discussed by Judt ended the Fifties out of date; even the Algerian war, where many of them played a courageous part, gave them only a brief extension of their lease on life. Finally there was the great spasm of historical memory in 1968 when barricades were planted in the Latin Quarter in the positions they occupied under the 1871 Commune, and the decorous corridors of the Sorbonne were encumbered by wild-eyed girls giving themselves to their tousled lovers under banners proclaiming the New Age: "We fear nothing; we have the pill!" All in all, a modernized eroticism was probably the most durable effect of the "events of May."

It is hardly surprising that the intellectual Left should have become what Sartre described as "the great carcass on its back, riddled with worms." Its demise was quite largely of Sartre's own doing, but he showed little sign of realizing this. Moreover, a pervasive intellectual dishonesty and a diet of Byzantine disputation and denunciation had a disastrous effect on the creativity of French literature itself. It is symbolic that Sartre himself should have been unable to complete his three volume novel *Les Chemins de la Liberté*. During the Fifties the most striking work of fiction was a distinctly "uncommitted" novel *Le Rivage des Syrtes* by Julien Gracq, a surrealist and an admirer of Stendhal. Without embarking on a discussion of the decline of French literature over

[3]Jean-Marie Domenach, the present editor of *Esprit* and a close disciple of Mounier, has attacked Professor Judt's book, accusing him of misquotation and failing to take into account the historical circumstances of men who had just passed through the German occupation. M. Domenach points out that, in 1943, he 'could not believe' in the Soviet massacre of Polish officers at Katyn, since this was publicized by the German propaganda services. This is understandable, but, after the war, when these special circumstances had disappeared, plenty of evidence came to light from untainted sources to confirm the reality of Katyn. Did M. Domenach and his friends accept the truth then? See *Commentaire* (Summer 1993), pp. 403-412 for this fascinating controversy.

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the last two decades, it is possible to wonder whether this did not have something to do with the sterility of much of French intellectual life between 1945 and 1960. The talents of these "committed" writers were unquestionably planted in a dry place, and something of their aridity seems to have been passed on to the practitioners of the "new novel."

However this may be, there is little doubt that the standing and international reputation of the French intellectual world suffered from the sophistry and ideological brutality that were common in the Paris of the Fifties. Professor Judt describes—and it is one of his most interesting points—the disillusionment felt by East Europeans on finding their plight ignored and their sufferings explained away in a country which they had been accustomed to regard as the source of intellectual freedom. In 1968 the reformers of the Prague Spring were described by members of the Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU)—a group led by the young Michel Rocard, later to become Mitterrand's prime minister—as "consenting victims of petit-bourgeois ideologies." More recently Milan Kundera wrote:

> Having for a long time been the nerve-centre of Europe, Paris is still today the capital of something more than France. Unfortunately, I think it is the disappearing capital of a disappearing world.

We do not yet know if there will be lasting effects from President Mitterrand's apparent eagerness to recognize the old Communist conspirators after the August 1991 putsch against Mikhail Gorbachev, or from the boorish behavior towards Boris Yeltsin of Jean-Pierre Cot, the leader of the Socialist group in the European parliament. But neither incident will have done much for the universal mission of French culture in countries east of the Elbe. It seems that something of the old spirit of rejection of East European dissidence still lingers, and France has lost a cultural clientele which once looked towards Paris with admiration.

Political gestures apart, the narrow sectarianism displayed by France's post-war intellectuals has left damaging traces, harming the reputation of French writing and lessening its attraction for readers living outside France. At a time when successive French governments have been making great efforts to maintain the status of French as an international language and resist the anglophone invasion of traditionally francophone areas, much of the contribution made by French intellectuals to the great debates of the second half of the twentieth century has appeared provincial and rebarbative to foreigners. This seems a gratuitous piece of self-injury. French culture has an immense amount to give to any reader who steeps himself in it—not least a clarity of language which makes a new subject more easily understood in French than, say, in English or German. Yet this asset was squandered when recent writers, sinning against the genius of their medium, achieved the considerable feat of making French prose opaque. Those intellectuals who were willing to abandon the great traditions of the French moralists to indulge in nagging dispute and pernicious casuistry have helped to restrict the role in the world of their own culture and language.

SO WHY DID these writers waste their talents and compromise their integrity in this way? The answer is complex. Old habits of thought, ideological battles, and bitterness engendered by the war years, the changed position of France in the world—all these played a part. Professor Judt has analyzed the problem acutely, but everyone interested in French history will have their own reflections on what is a more important matter than may appear in the age of Disneyland and fast food.

The French language has long been known to adapt itself particularly well to the use of abstract concepts. The classical revolution in the seventeenth century carried

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written French away from the multiplication of concrete terms and grammatical confusion, which marked it—like other European languages—during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. What it lost in richness, it gained in cogency. It developed a tendency towards generalization and categorization which made it an ideal vehicle for exposition and the communication of diplomatic exchanges. International affairs lost in comprehensibility when the precise definition of meaning possible in French was replaced by the confusedly rhetorical evocation of undefined concepts that has become the stock in trade of English-speaking diplomacy.

However, for all the advantages of an aptitude for generalization, this habit of mind succumbs easily to one danger. Abstraction leads away from the harsh reality of the individual case. It is one thing to talk of "breaking eggs to make an omelet" or "revolutionary justice." It is quite another to see a head fall—even if it is that of a "fascist" or an "agent-provocateur." The nature of Stalinism is more vividly illustrated by an anecdote like that of the dictator's bodyguard amusing him with an imitation of Zinoviev being dragged to execution than by the horrifying, but less immediate, impact of the statistics of those murders. In the decade after 1945, French intellectuals fell into this trap of a generalization which sanitized raw fact and placed an anaesthetizing distance between them and the fate of victims, whom they might otherwise have had the weakness to pity. Events took place, not in the real world, but in a universe of make-believe where to lose an argument was the most serious misfortune possible. It was a looking-glass world. Why worry about those dim and distant shapes subsiding into their mass graves in the name of historical inevitability?

In addition, ever since 1789, French intellectuals had been accustomed to use a type of rhetoric formed by Revolution or Counter-Revolution. It was, of course, not entirely serious. When Péguy announced that "the policy of the Convention is Jaurès in a tumbril, and the roll of a drum to cover that great voice," he was not proposing to execute the great Socialist leader—though he may have been read by Raoul Villain, who went on to assassinate Jaurès—but using revolutionary imagery, and, incidentally, exposing the tenuous reality behind it. Phrases like "public safety" or "enemies of the Republic" were commonplace in speeches by mildly left-wing deputies. Why should they not be? The most authoritative historians of the day, Aulard and Mathiez, were ready to take a lenient view of massacres committed in defense of the Republic. Similarly, on the Right, Charles Maurras wrote for years as if he was a public prosecutor demanding the heads of his opponents, and, during the Vichy period, what began as rhetoric ended as reality. The unreality of the ideological battle among French intellectuals was never better illustrated than by Maurras's exclamations at his trial for treason in 1945: "It is Dreyfus's revenge!"

Polemical exchanges between ideological contenders in France, with their showy rhetoric and the clichés drawn from a violent history, were to a large extent shadow-boxing, though anti-clericalism and "integral" Catholicism could inject venom into the argument. French intellectuals had become used to judging, not real situations, but the myths that they themselves had constructed. Only this can explain how it was possible for them to talk, say, of refusing to drive the working-class to despair by criticism of the Communist Party without bursting into laughter. That "working-class" was as much a construct of their own myth-making as anything else. Something too must be attributed to self-satisfaction. To lay down the law from an attic flat in the Latin Quarter was a tempting mission in life. How satisfying to feel oneself the defender of the march of history. No wonder that a certain complacency crept into the writings of Sartre and his followers—the complacency of the members of a small sect who knew that they were right and whose erratic *crises de conscience* only

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made their election surer. For their constant discussion of their own motives and their casuistical dismissal of inconvenient facts bore witness in their own eyes to their moral concern. For men like Sartre or Mounier the game was fascinating. In any case, it was played out to the end of their lives.

Finally, it has to be said that if between 1945 and 1955 French intellectuals were constantly unwilling to look facts in the face when the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe were concerned, this was due in part to mere ignorance of foreign countries. Just as, during the Thirties, many British politicians could not imagine what Nazi Germany or its leader were like, so French intellectuals had no imaginative understanding either of Russia or of the nature of an oriental despot like Stalin. (Of course, neither had they much idea of other countries; one of the more laughable sections of Simone de Beauvoir's novel *Les Mandarins* deals with a left-wing writer's life in Chicago). This isolation, physical and intellectual, reinforced by the war, made it easy for them to take their "facts" from official Communist documents or from the admiring chorus of French communist publicists. Personal experience was confined to France, the France of a highly educated, narrowly based elite. Sartre and his friends had not the least idea of Eastern Europe—one doubts if those who went, say, to the Wroclaw Cultural Conference for Peace in 1948 ever took a stroll in the town. They had never seen Stalin's secret police at work, nor would they listen to anyone who had.

Professor Judt's story is a melancholy one. It deals with men, often endowed with great talents, who condemned themselves to impotence through the indulgence of their own fantasies. By abandoning intellectual standards and moral decency, they did great damage to France's reputation and its position as a center of European culture. Paris, of all cities, should not have been the place where indifference was shown to the fate of European writers who had admired its cultural life and who, in their struggle for freedom of expression, felt they were entitled to a word of support from its famous names. Sartre is often described as the "last" French intellectual, and perhaps this is true enough if we understand the word in the social sense traditionally attributed to it in French culture. Certainly he and his friends cast enough discredit on this particular vocation to discourage others from wishing to follow in their footsteps.

FORTUNATELY this is not the last word that can be said about intellectual life in France during the Fifties. There were individuals who did not succumb to ideological orthodoxies and showed courage and common sense in the repudiation of contemporary fashion. François Mauriac and Raymond Aron were two writers who looked at facts as they were and impartially denounced inhumanity wherever it occurred. History will assign to Aron a particularly important place in that modernization of French intellectual habits which has taken place over the last decades and has included a far-reaching revision of the way France's history is perceived and taught. Not since the "Orléanists" of the mid-nineteenth century, to whom Péguy refused a place in the true tradition of France, have so many facts, as distinct from opinions, been brought to light about the present and past of the country.

In the Fifties, Aron and other intellectuals stood for honesty and a refusal to excuse oppression. That they also stood for modernity and a renewal of French thought became apparent later. As so often in French history, a few just men saved the reputation of France and the future of its cultural influence. That is a story that deserves to be set beside Professor Judt's depressing dissection of self-deception and evasion. □

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Enough Said

Neil McInnes

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993). 380pp., $25.00.

PROFESSOR SAID says that his aim is to set works of art of the imperialist and post-colonial eras into their historical context. "My method is to focus as much as possible on individual works, to read them first as great products of the creative and interpretive imagination, and then to show them as part of the relationship between culture and empire." He says he has not "completely worked out theory of the connection between literature and culture on the one hand, and imperialism on the other"; he just hopes to discover connections. He says it is useful to do this because "by looking at culture and imperialism carefully...we shall see that we can profitably draw connections that enrich and sharpen our reading of major cultural texts." Indeed, it is more than useful; it must be obligatory if he is right in saying that the "major, I would say determining, political horizon of modern Western culture [is] imperialism," and that to ignore that fact, as critical theory, deconstruction and Marxism do, "is to disaffiliate modern culture from its engagements and attachments."

Having set himself this vast task, which would cover virtually all Western history for the past three centuries, Professor Said must cut it back to manageable size: he will deal with parts of the British and French empires only, and culture will be represented by a small number of novels and one opera. Thereby the proposed Herculean labors come down to looking for references to the colonies in some works of fiction.

That occupies only the first two of four chapters. He then turns to the question of how decolonization is reflected in the culture of newly independent nations. In turn, this large subject is cut down to "one fairly discrete aspect of this powerful impingement"—that is, the work of intellectuals from the colonial or peripheral regions who wrote in an "imperial language" and who reflected on western culture. So we pass from Jane Austen's mentions of Antigua to Caribbean, Bengali and Malaysian views of imperialist practices. It is an original idea to put them together, but already the reader feels that the book is beginning to sprawl. That feeling grows when this third chapter deviates into a theory about decolonization as a political process, and about the difference between independence and liberation.

By the fourth and last chapter Professor Said has quite lost the thread and we are treated to a familiar denunciation of "American cultural imperialism." The only Western works of art mentioned here are "Dynasty," "Dallas," and "I Love Lucy" and there is no suggestion that they refer to empire in the way Kipling and Conrad did. There is much perfervid sweeping generalization about Western intellectuals' treatment of the Third World, notably of Islam during the Gulf War, balanced (if that is the word) by frank denunciations of the lack of liberty in that same Third World, notably again in Islam.

So what we have here is a book on literature plus two or three pamphlets that contain much ranting, all barely held together in a bad case of intellectual sprawl. For the casual reader, there is plenty of interesting erudition and some sensitive literary analysis (of Kipling's *Kim*, for example) along with

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too much heated political diatribe. For students—supposing this book attains the trendy academic status of Said's *Orientalism*—there is only confusion, engendered by shifting definitions of such key words as "imperialism" and by Said's propensity to extravagant generalization, of this sort: "Without empire, I would go so far as saying, there is no European novel..." These vast generalizations (which alternate with angry attacks on other people's unwarranted "totalizations") are followed by passages of hedging and qualification, where Said affects to be moderate and cautious, but he soon resumes his extreme claims as though he had conceded nothing. One gets the impression that he wants to occupy all possible positions on a subject, always readying himself to deal with criticism by retorting, "Oh, but I say that too!"

Perhaps the basic difficulty and source of confusion is that "and" in his title. The reality is that the spread of British people and their civilization to the American colonies, to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere was a cultural phenomenon or it was nothing. That we can also call it imperialism does not mean that we thereby get two distinct things, one called culture and the other called empire, so that we can now ask how one "intersects with" or determines or causes the other. This is what happens when, for example, people ask whether ideology is determined by the economy. In order to get two things so distinct that one could determine the other, we have to find a completely non-ideological economy, and since that is impossible the discussion becomes confused.

There is a perfectly logical way of fudging this sort of problem: give each term so narrow a definition that you do get two distinct things which might then interact. For instance, you decree that the economy is "money-grubbing" and ideology is "high-falutin' ideas." You then have a genuine question: how do high-falutin' ideas disguise or glorify money-grubbing. The trouble is, conceived so narrowly, the problem loses much of its interest and descends to petty "unmasking." This is the method Said adopts in the first part of his book. Imperialism is given the narrow definition of stealing territory: "The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about." Culture is given an even narrower definition: "a realm of unchanging intellectual monuments, free from worldly affiliations." So now the supposed problem is how the activity of stealing land from natives shows up in, is romanticized or excused in, apparently apolitical works of art. It should be clear in advance that, first, such a narrow matter could be described as "imperialism and culture" only in a fit of grandiloquence; second, it will dredge up a list of allusions, hints, and mere mentions so long as it deals with works of art and not political tracts; third, it will culminate in So What?

The narrow view of imperialism as naked territorial rapacity cannot, of course, be sustained for long. When Said wants to denounce U.S. foreign policy, he has to call it "imperialism without colonies" and "cultural colonialism," silently abandoning his own theory. Well before that he finds he cannot even account for classic imperialism, because he thinks there is a problem about how "Britain's great humanistic ideas, institutions, and monuments, which we still celebrate...co-existed so comfortably with imperialism." He is genuinely puzzled that the land of Jane Austen, John Stuart Mill, and Keats could run an empire, which is why he goes looking for tell-tale signs of guilt about empire in the highest reaches of British culture. Blinded by his narrow view of it, he cannot see that imperialist culture included not only authoritarian, commercial, and supremacist strains, but also libertarian, reformist, and co-operative forces dedicated to ideals of trusteeship, devolution (after the shock of the loss of the American colonies) and eventual partnership. Even more important, it was these latter forces that in the end won out over the likes of Curzon and Churchill; without always actually meaning

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to decolonize, they made so many adjustments, concessions, and reforms that empire was eroded from within. As P.J. Marshall has said, "An imperial identity ebbed away over a long period without a sudden disorientating crisis of loss." That is how scores of nations were freed from European imperialism, whereas Said's narrow view could only explain (in part) exceptional cases like Algeria, where land was tenaciously clung to.

SAID DESCRIBES his aim thus: "my subject [is] how culture participates in imperialism yet is somehow excused for its role." Or again: "One of my reasons for writing this book is to show how far the quest for, concern about, and consciousness of overseas dominion extended not just in Conrad but in figures we practically never think of in that connection like Thackeray and Austen and how enriching and important for the critic is attention to this material..." Well, what does he deliver?

He takes Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and turns up six references to Antigua and one to slavery. Now, in fact that is extremely interesting, as long as you can resist (as, alas, Professor Said cannot resist) the temptation to jump to earth-shattering, world-historical conclusions. When Jane Austen tells us that Sir Thomas Bertram's business trips are to the Caribbean and that it is not done to mention slavery in his house, she is hinting that that marvelous world of decorum, comfort, and respectability to which Fanny Price aspired was financed in part by plantation slavery. I am ashamed that I missed that point when I read the novel and watched the television series, and I am grateful to Said for stressing it. But he only knows because Jane Austen told him, so his airs of unmasking the imperialist villain, of smoking out perfidy from ethereal aesthetic creation are hardly warranted.

Thackeray is promised as another example, in the passage I have quoted. He goes on being promised and appearing in lists of imperial writers, but nothing ever comes of it but this: one character in *Vanity Fair* is described as a nabob and there are sundry other "mentions" (Said's word) of India in the novel. Said concludes, "All through *Vanity Fair* there are allusions to India but none is anything more than incidental...Yet Thackeray and, I would argue, all the major English novelists of the mid-nineteenth century, accepted a globalized world-view and indeed could not (in most cases did not) ignore the vast overseas of British power."

The rest of his evidence for this large conclusion is equally slender: Rochester's deranged wife in *Jane Eyre* was a West Indian, and was not Abel Magwich in *Great Expectations* transported to Australia? A character in Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady* took a trip to Algeria and Egypt! The pickings are so slim that Said admits that through much of the nineteenth-century empire was "only [a] marginally visible presence in fiction." He even takes to complaining that it is not mentioned enough, because the wretched imperialists took it for granted, like their servants who feature only as props in novels. None of this deters him from his grand conclusion: there could be no novel without empire. Why not? Because of "the far from accidental convergence between the patterns of narrative authority constitutive of the novel on the one hand, and, on the other, a complex ideological configuration underlying the tendency of imperialism." This central mystery is never explained. One example is proffered (to Said's credit, diffidently): "Richardson's minute constructions of bourgeois seduction and rapacity" in *Clarissa* resemble "British military moves against the French in India occurring at the same time."

In one of those accesses of mock moderation, Said adds, "I am not trying to say that the novel—or the culture in the broad sense—'caused' imperialism, but that the novel, as a cultural artifact of bourgeois society, and imperialism are unthinkable without each other...imperialism and the novel fortified each other to such a degree that it is impossible, I would argue, to read one with-

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out in some way dealing with the other." No such "moderate" conclusion has been established, but Said is soon back to claiming that "we can see it [the novel] as participating in England's overseas empire" and that British imperial "power was elaborated and articulated in the novel." Therefore, we are bidden to re-read "the entire archive of modern and pre-modern European and American culture," no less, in order to discover "the centrality of the imperial vision." It will be worth the effort because we shall be rewarded with such nuggets of knowledge as that the Wilcox family in *Howard's End* owned rubber plantations! And the plague in "*Death in Venice*" came from the East! So did the wandering Jew, Leopold Bloom! Thus and thus does fiction fortify imperialism.

Said then tries his hand at opera, choosing the easy target of Verdi's *Aida*. The Cairo opera house had opened in 1869 as part of the celebrations for the inauguration of the Suez Canal and although Verdi declined the invitation to write a hymn for that occasion, he soon after agreed to write an opera for the Khedive, one based on an Egyptian story. So Said is correct to see *Aida* as a quintessential imperialist party-piece, a slap-up night out for the Suez speculators in the phony European sector of Cairo. *Aida*, he says, is "not so much *about* but *of* imperial domination."

But Said cannot rest there. He soars aloft: "The cultural machinery [of spectacles like *Aida*]...has had an aesthetic as well as informative effect on European audiences...such distancing and aestheticizing cultural practices...split and then anaesthetize the metropolitan consciousness. In 1865 the British governor of Jamaica, E.J. Eyre, ordered a retaliatory massacre of Blacks for the killing of a few whites..." Not everyone in Britain would condemn Eyre; Ruskin, Carlyle, and Arnold would not. Their attitude reminds Said of American popular approval of the Gulf War: "making America strong and enhancing President Bush's image as a leader took precedence over destroying a distant society," even so soon after "two million Vietnamese were killed" and while "Southeast Asia is still devastated."

At this point the bemused reader is apt to rub his eyes and run his finger along the text, for how did we get, literally from one page to the next, from *Aida* in Cairo in 1871, to a Jamaican massacre in 1865, to Vietnam and then to the Gulf War? We did it because Said reasons that Western art about an Oriental subject anaesthetizes Western consciousness to the point where at least some people are brought to excuse massacres of natives and foreign wars. And that is one way culture is connected to imperialism.

At least, it is one way Said slides from literary criticism to political tub-thumping. The whole book takes just such a slide partway through the third chapter. He has been discussing the interesting fiction and theory coming out of the new nations, and he notes that some of it is highly critical, not so much of the former imperialists as of the nationalist rulers who have succeeded them. He readily agrees that decolonization has, in many countries, led only to a change in the color of the oppressors, to "an appalling pathology of power," to dictatorships, oligarchies, and one-party systems. He lists Third World countries where human rights are denied and asks, is this the only alternative to imperialism? No, there is another answer to imperialism besides nationalism, "a deeper opposition" and "a radically new perspective."

Astonishingly, the radically new perspective turns out to be an idea that Frantz Fanon published over thirty years ago: true liberation, as distinct from mere national independence, can only be won in a war of cleansing violence that will set the peasants, the damned of the earth, against not only the imperialists but their own urban compatriots. In the course of this war of liberation, there will occur "an epistemological revolution," and "a transformation of social consciousness." Said has a long section on

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Fanon's *Les Damnés de la Terre* (1962) which consists of ecstatic paraphrase. The "shift from the terrain of nationalist independence to the theoretical domain of liberation," Said declares, requires "a fertile culture of resistance whose core is energetic insurgency, a 'technique of trouble'" and sometimes armed insurrection.

Said calmly says of this liberationist literature that "there is an understandable tendency...to see in it a blueprint for the horrors of the Pol Pot regime." Indeed there is, and Said does nothing to counter that tendency except to assert that the violence invoked is only "tactical." That is one of those fine distinctions that gets overlooked in the killing fields. Moreover, as one might expect from a fine connoisseur of fiction who ventures into political theory, Said is vague about whether this miraculous cultural rebirth in violent war has actually occurred anywhere (apart from Cambodia, I suppose) or whether it could happen anywhere else. "Algeria was liberated, as were Kenya and the Sudan," he says but is careful not to hold them up as successful cases of rebirth. He finally concedes that Fanon's ideas failed because he had no answer to nationalism.

Why spend so much time on him then, trumpeting him as the inventor of the alternative to both imperialism and nationalism? Said's reply to that seems to be that liberationist ideas survive as "an imaginative, even utopian vision which reconceives emancipatory (as opposed to confining) theory and performance." Besides that, such ideas encourage "an investment neither in new authorities, doctrines, and encoded orthodoxies, nor in established institutions and causes, but in a particular sort of nomadic, migratory, and anti-narrative energy." It is not clear what that means but it does not sound like practical politics.

I suspect, basing myself on passages scattered throughout this book, that Said is being coy here, even evasive. I believe he has in mind a specific case where Fanon's ideas about cleansing violence and cultural rebirth still have a chance. That case is the Palestinian *intifada* in the occupied territories of Israel.

He has spoken of the imperialist West's "regional surrogates" in the Middle East in a context that makes plain he has Israel in view. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands thereby becomes a case of imperialism, and anyhow it answers to his definition of imperialism as stealing land from natives. Consequently, the Palestinian *intifada* becomes "one of the great anti-colonial uprisings of our times." It ranks with such vast causes as the ecological and women's movements as an example of a worldwide "elusive oppositional mood and its emerging strategies," a mood that must "hearten even the most intransigent pessimist." It is one of those mass uprisings such as occurred in the Philippines and South Africa, which feature "impressive crowd-activated sites, each of them crammed with largely unarmed civilian populations, well past the point of enduring the imposed deprivations, tyranny and inflexibility of governments that had ruled them for too long." Those stone-throwing Palestinian youths are memorable for the "resourcefulness and the startling symbolism of the protests," just like the heroic mobs of South Africa and communist Eastern Europe.

This comes to rating the *intifada* pretty highly, but there is nothing absurd in that, nor anything ignoble. If Said does not say outright that the Palestinian cause is the last hope of Fanon's liberationist ideals, it might be because he is not sure. When he wrote this book, he had not visited the land of his birth since 1947 (although he was a member of the Palestine National Council, the parliament-in-exile, from 1977 to 1991), but since then he has gone back for a visit. He is now composing a memoir about it. It might tell us something interesting, particularly if it relies on what he sees rather than on the theories proposed in *Culture and Imperialism*. □

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Balkan Ghosts:

NOEL MALCOLM ends his diatribe about *Balkan Ghosts* by noting the different ways in which I spell the Romanian word for Gypsies. That Malcolm would criticize me for a proofreader's error is final proof that this was not a review, but an agenda-driven essay by an area specialist, one required to apologize for the sins of his adopted region. Malcolm believes "hatred is not a driving force" in Yugoslavia; that the Bosnian war is all the doing of modern politicians—as if they work in a vacuum without a history behind them. I hope he wasn't advising the British government on the likelihood of war in Bosnia.

Malcolm's London *Spectator* article about Greece, "The New Bully of the Balkans," (August 15, 1992) demonstrates how he is guilty of doing what he claims I do: demonize an entire nation. So he praises me for my critical section on Greece and Papandreou. He calls it a "tour de force." Only when I conform to Malcolm's prejudices am I praised.

Malcolm accuses me of "modern Serb hatred" for not writing about the recent crimes of the Serbs. I dislike headline books, and therefore did not expand the Yugoslav section. But in the preface to *Balkan Ghosts*, I state that "nothing I write should be taken as a justification, however mild, for the war crimes committed by ethnic Serb troops in Bosnia, which I heartily condemn."

Malcolm disagrees that Romania was a bad place for Jews. He says the twentieth century was untypical of how Jews were treated in the Balkans. All the Jews I interviewed in Romania disagree. The most bloodcurdling pogrom in Jewish history occurred in Bucharest. The twentieth century was untypical for Jews in Romania in that the suspicion of peasants for the bourgeoisie kicked over into mass murder. The mass murder would not have been possible had the hatred not existed in the first place. Malcolm disagrees with my depiction of northern Romania—the place where Romanian political anti-Semitism was invented—as anti-Semitic. His argument is that Jews fared better under the Ottoman Empire than in the Slavic-Germanic world. He doesn't say that the anti-Semitic acts I wrote about took place after Turkish control had ceased. Malcolm says Nazi policy, not Balkan hated, was responsible for crimes against Jews. But many Nazi troops in the Balkans were raised from local communities. Concentration camps in Croatia and Transdneistria were run from top-to-bottom by Croatians and Romanians.

Like some extremist Croatian newspapers, Malcolm finds me too critical of Cardinal Stepinac, convicted by Tito as a war criminal. He says my conflicted attitude toward Stepinac, at "first benign, then denunciatory," reveals how "uneasy" I am about my own writing. My writing is conflicted and uneasy, since I was determined to be fair without becoming an apologist. Malcolm, while elsewhere accusing me of polemic, here convicts me of objectivity. Malcolm defends the behavior of World War II Croatia by saying the pro-Nazi puppet state was not typical in Croatian history. It wasn't typical, but it was a *defining* moment. The present reality in Croatia bears me out: the style and symbols of today's Croatian regime hark back to the *Ustashe*.

Malcolm implies I blame the Greeks for the slaughter of Jews in Salonica during World War II. My narrative makes clear that I don't blame the Greeks for killing Jews, but for erasing their memory from the city once they had been killed by the Germans.

Malcolm claims I don't like Turks. His reason is my comment that the dignified air

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of Turks "was the luxury of the conquerors." The Turks were conquerors. Because of that, as I explain in my book, Turks lack the anger of Greeks, Serbs, and others who share the chip-on-the-shoulder attitude common to conquered peoples. Malcolm says my comparison of the slums in Pristina to those in Turkey evinces an anti-Turkish sentiment. The comparison makes sense. Albanians, of all Balkan peoples, identify with Turks. Also, having just spent time interviewing people in the *gecekondu* districts of Istanbul, I can attest to how similar they look to parts of Pristina.

The Macedonian section of *Balkan Ghosts* ran first in *The Atlantic Monthly*, and was vigorously gone over by fact checkers—a category of editor that Malcolm may never have encountered. The chapter's premise, written four years ago, was that the world's attention would focus on Macedonia by the end of the century. But Malcolm has nothing good to say about it. He claims Macedonian has long been a separate language. Many other scholars claim that is false. They say Macedonian is a dialect of western Bulgarian or south Serbian. This dispute among experts like Malcolm, who ridicule every truth except their own, is what my chapter focuses on. Concerning Macedonia, Malcolm accuses me of a pro-Greek bias. This would be news to Greeks, who have accused me of being a "Bulgarian agent." Malcolm implies that I support the Greek academic-nationalist, Evangelos Kofos. In the book's index, there are three references to Kofos: in one, I quote Kofos in order to debunk him. The other two references concern statements by Kofos that are rather innocuous. The inflammatory statement ascribed to Kofos in Malcolm's diatribe is nowhere to be found in my book.

I finished *Balkan Ghosts* before the first shot was fired in Yugoslavia. I predicted on paper the capacity of the region for great bloodshed. This is a vision you would never get from Malcolm's description of the Balkans—a region of kindly people (except for the Greeks), whose problems can be blamed on foreigners. Yet events have proven me right. *Balkan Ghosts* is in its seventh hardcover print run.

Robert Kaplan
Potomac, MD

THE BASIC PROBLEM I think, is that Mr. Kaplan cannot read. I did not note the different ways in which he spells the Romanian word for gypsies; I noted that the one way he spells it is completely wrong. Does he blame proof-readers (or fact-checkers) for all the other similar errors in his book, some of them gross and persistent? He thinks I could not have advised anyone of the likelihood of war in Bosnia; on the contrary, I described in my review just how that likelihood arose. (I also predicted it, accurately analyzing its causes, not just talking vaguely of the capacity of the region for great bloodshed, in an article published six months before the war started.) I did not accuse him of modern Serb hatred for having not written about recent Serb crimes; I pointed out that what he did write about the Kosovo Albanians was in agreement with modern Serb hatred, since it ignored the history of the Serb treatment of the Albanians throughout this century and seemed to imply that the very presence of Albanians in Kosovo was a crime. I did not call Mr. Kaplan "First benign, then denunciatory" or "uneasy" about Stepinac; those phrases referred very clearly to Stepinac's own attitude to the Ustasa state. He has misread the whole passage. I did not write that Romania was not a bad place for Jews; I denied that it was as terrible as Mr. Kaplan thinks, and argued that the large-scale political violence against Jews in the twentieth century is not a typical sign of ancient ethnic hatred, given that it did not happen in the previous centuries which included the Ottoman period. His ingenious description between "typical" and "defining" is made nowhere in his book. My statement that it was Nazi policy that killed the Jews of

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Skopje and Salonica is not disproved by the fact that they used some local personnel; I note that Mr. Kaplan also contradicts himself on this point, blaming Balkan communities for those killings in one part of his reply and exonerating them in another. He has not understood what I wrote about the Macedonian identity: of course scholars can still argue about whether Pulevski was right to promote Macedonian as a separate language in 1875, but the point I made was that Mr. Kaplan was displaying ignorance when he wrote that "when Delchev lived [1872-1903], nobody promoted such a separate Macedonian identity." As for Dr. Kofos, the statement ascribed to him in my review is to be found, exactly as I quoted it, on page 68 of Mr. Kaplan's book. Or was that part of the book written by the proofreader too?

Noel Malcolm
London, England

The Strange Death of Soviet Communism:

YOUR SPECIAL Issue provided superb answers to the key question, "Why did the Soviet Union collapse?" What is largely missing, however is a response to Charles Fairbanks's broader version of this inquiry—"What, if anything, the failure of many major innovations of the Soviet system to take root shows about humanity." Fairbanks posits that the issues involved transcend the Soviet puzzle and go to the relationship between man and society. Fairbanks's query can be answered in two possible ways. Either the collapse of communism was, in Marxist parlance, historically preordained, because the government system it inevitably spawned was evil, and as such, could not repress the human spirit forever. Or else, the CPSU (and, for that matter, any other totalitarian regime) could have survived indefinitely, and was brought down by a combination of superior Western statecraft, mistakes committed by a succession of Soviet leaders and some well-timed lucky breaks for the West. We find much merit in this latter view.

The Special Issue does not squarely answer Fairbanks' question, although Rush's essay comes closest with an observation that "the role of chance in this chain of events [destruction of communism] was crucial." The authors do not fully account for the possibility that, had a few events taken a different turn, the CPSU rule might have endured well into the twenty-first century. What we particularly take issue with is the seeming key implication of the authors' observations regarding the lessons of the Soviet collapse: any totalitarian regime, *no matter how ruthless*, cannot prevent the emergence of at least a proto-civil society, a trend that would eventually cause its undoing. In our view, Moscow's "legitimate failure" became widespread only *after* the CPSU's rule already showed unmistakable signs of collapse and the Party lost its "mandate of heaven" in the eyes of Soviet citizens. In any case, this legitimacy shortfall became operationally relevant when Gorbachev, while trying to sustain communism with a "human face," in Rush's apt characterization, "lifted fear, a feat he had accomplished by the spring of 1989."

It is precisely because the demise of communism was not historically preordained, that the post-World War II American policy in general, and the strategic course pursued by the last two Republican administrations in particular, deserved praise. Thus, we agree that the basic thrust of Sestanovich's cogent argument—the Reagan-Bush policies, by demonstrating the ultimate futility of the Soviet foreign and defense policies, caused the major segments of the military and the KGB, institutions which otherwise would have been the staunchest defenders of the status quo, to become the proponents of reforms. It was the reform mood of these two bureaucratic players, combined with the

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Party's "habit of obedience," that enabled Gorbachev to outmaneuver the Iron Triangle that undergirded the Soviet system.

All of this is not a semantic quibble. Numerous pundits, who for decades were "soft on communism" and proclaimed that it was here to stay, now opine that the USSR's fall was preordained and that the West did not need to engage in an "arms race" or wage an assertive foreign policy. This is a combination of historical revisionism and pseudo-historical determinism that is no better than the erstwhile Soviet belief in the inevitability of a world-wide Marxist triumph. In reality, nothing in history is inevitable. While great ideas matter, history is shaped by actions of human beings. Moreover, intellectual shortcomings aside, insofar as the flawed interpretation of Soviet history implies that any truly evil regime is destined to collapse of its own weight, it provides a poor basis for an assertive Western policy in a turbulent post-Cold War world.

Paula J. Dobriansky
David B. Rivkin
Washington, DC

A LETTER FROM Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., informs me that I misremembered his account, in his biography of Robert Kennedy, of the relations between the attorney-general and the CIA efforts to kill Castro. I had written in "Did We Go Too Far?" (Spring 1993) of my surprise learning from his biography of "the efforts of the attorney-general...to kill Castro." It is clear to me now that my surprise and shock was at learning that U.S. government agents were engaged in such activities: Robert Kennedy, in Arthur Schlesinger's account, did not initiate or condone these efforts.

Nathan Glazer
Cambridge, MA

WALTER LAQUEUR, in replying to General Odom and myself, is right that émigré Mensheviks, in the 1920s and 1930s, were "realistic and perspicacious" in assessing Soviet developments that few Westerners at the time understood. But he goes much too far in claiming that "all serious Sovietology came out of the mantle of Menshevism." Alas, all too much Sovietology came out of Menshevism, and it was gravely flawed by something Laqueur fails to mention: the position from which the Mensheviks spoke. They were, after all, socialists, Marxists, and revolutionaries, whose chief quarrel with their *frères ennemis* was that the latter had spoiled a good proletarian revolution.

This singularly limited their "perspicacity." For example, Martov, after refusing to join the opposition against Lenin during the Civil War, in 1921 vehemently attacked his NEP as a betrayal of socialism. And Mensheviks were the brains of *Gosplan* in the 1920s and the authors of the initial, allegedly "realistic," First Five Year Plan. Their aim was thus to salvage something from the Soviet adventure, not to unmask it as a fraud—an attitude in fact parallel to the Trotskyites.

But the real influence of Menshevism on Western Sovietology came in the wake of World War II. The charming émigrés grouped in Leopold Haimson's New York "Menshevik Project" had an enormous, if diffuse, influence on nascent American graduate study of Russia. Their message was a reductionist base-superstructure model of history, social "polarization" as the motive force of the Revolution, and Russian "backwardness" as the cause of the Revolution's failure. And Haimson's distressingly seminal article of 1964, transmitting all this, was indeed a belated "Menshevik Manifesto."

Martin Malia
Berkeley, CA

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WALTER LAQUEUR believes that I, among other contributors to *The National Interest* issue on the "Strange Death of Soviet Communism," have made a travesty of the role of the Mensheviks in Western Sovietology. Long an admirer of his compelling scholarship, I take his charge seriously. What is to be made of it?

He has a partial point on Menshevik aspirations for the "redemption" of Lenin. I should have clarified a distinction in attitude toward Lenin that separates several European Social Democrats from the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks never forgave Lenin's despotic methods, although some held hope that he would change after he arrived at the Finland Station in 1917. Lenin's goal of socialism was another matter. That, combined with his tyrannical leadership in Marxist revolutionary circles, created the Menshevik dilemma.

Because the Mensheviks were still trying to play a role in those circles throughout the 1920s, they certainly knew of Bolshevism's brutal methods. They rightly told us that Bolsheviks were bad fellows. Yet Bolshevik wickedness did not make them give up on Marxian socialism. They wanted to redeem it from Lenin if not necessarily with Lenin.

Those brilliant Mensheviks—and Laqueur should note that I paid tribute to their scholarship in the West—were more willing to become victims of Bolshevism than to be driven into the ranks of the Russian bourgeois political circles. Alliances with the bourgeoisie, yes, but not ideological agreement. If this is a "new orthodoxy," then I hasten to spread it.

True, the Mensheviks repeatedly swore their commitment to democracy. Socialism and democracy, in their view, are highly compatible. They are not, however, if socialism means the absence of private property. I elaborated on that point in my article and shall not repeat it here.

The perspicacity of Menshevik analysis of Soviet politics impresses Laqueur. They wrote and disagreed so much that he can undoubtedly find evidence for his judgment. But how does he explain such perspicacious Menshevik insights as the following: 1) That Lenin would not be able to keep power when he took it in 1917; 2) that the NEP was the beginning of counterrevolution (leading some Mensheviks to start scheming for deals with the "good" Bolsheviks like Bukharin and even Zinoviev and Trotsky; 3) that Stalin's rapid industrialization might progress toward socialism, or conversely, would insure counterrevolution; 4) that the Menshevik nationality policy differed little from the policy of the Bolsheviks, the Constitutional Democrats, and the White Armies. (They all instinctively acted as Russian imperialists).

With his hyperbole that "all serious American Sovietology came from the mantle of Menshevism, and this includes those not aware of it," Laqueur confirms the main point I was making about Menshevism—the political bias fostered in Western understanding of Soviet politics. If democracy and Marxist socialism are truly compatible, why could the Soviet Union not evolve into a pluralist, democratic state? Indeed, the Mensheviks bequeathed this "pluralist mirage" to *some* American Sovietologists, but not *all*. Merle Fainsod, G.T. Robinson, Henry L. Roberts, and Robert Conquest come to mind as stark exceptions. Certainly they learned from the Mensheviks, just as they learned from Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky.

I respectfully defer to Laqueur's deeper knowledge of the intricacies of Menshevism. I hope he will defer to my reporting of the confusion that the Menshevik mantle created for me and others of my generation in graduate school when we were trying to sort out their puzzling and incompatible claims.

William Odom
Washington, DC

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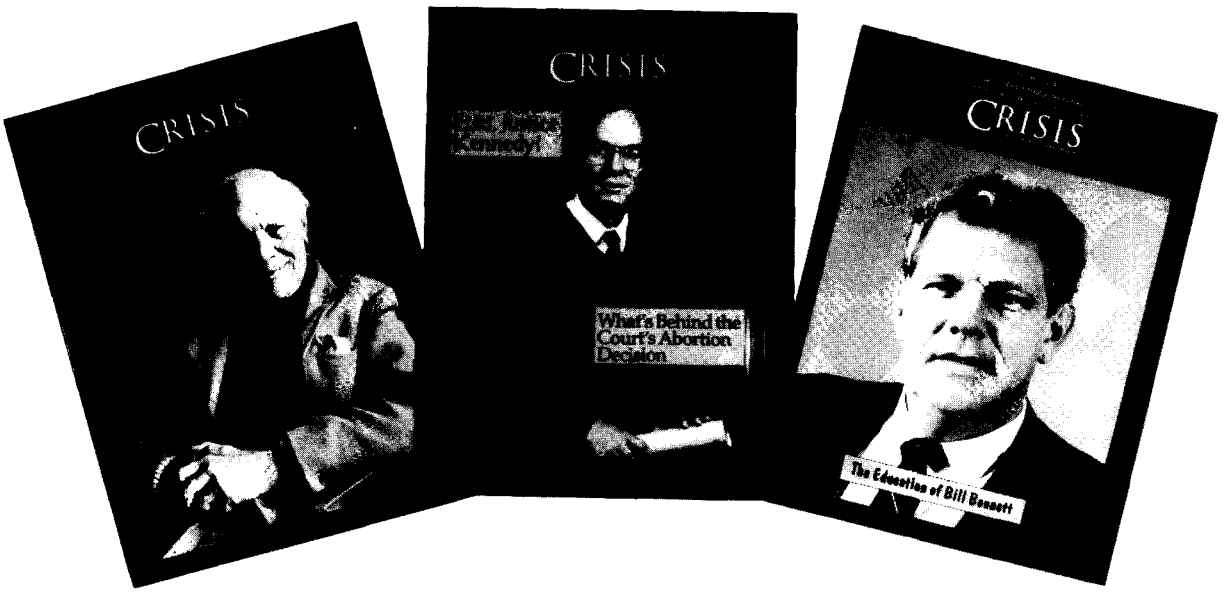

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Poets on Power (and its loss)

Owen Harries

IN THE SPRING of 1939, at the end of what he was to call "a low dishonest decade," W.H. Auden looked back across the Atlantic at the continent he had just left and wrote:

> In the nightmare of the dark
> All the dogs of Europe bark,
> And the living nations wait,
> Each sequestered in its hate;
>
> Intellectual disgrace
> Stares from every human face,
> All the seas of pity lie
> Locked and frozen in each eye.

As recently as two years ago this would have read like the description of a vanished Europe, one relegated to history. At that time, optimism was high, with "unity" the theme in the western part of the continent and "democracy" in the east. Now, though things are not remotely as bad as they were when Auden wrote, his lines again seem uncomfortably relevant to what is happening in Europe—hate among nations in the east, a kind of disgrace in the west. And pity frozen in the eye of the television screen.

In fact, turning the pages of a collected Auden, one's eye repeatedly catches something that seems strikingly appropriate to the state of Europe today. In the short poem "Brussels in Winter," for example, he writes about the future headquarters of NATO and the European Community:

> Its formula escapes you; it has lost
> The certainty that constitutes a thing.

Which seems to sum up the current state of both "Europe" and "the West" about as succinctly as it could be done.

In "The Fall of Rome," a poem he dedicated to Cyril Connolly, Auden depicts the decay of the West with the kind of images that came to be described as "Audenesque":

> The piers are pummelled by the waves;
> In a lonely field the rain
> Lashes an abandoned train;
> Outlaws fill the mountain caves.
>
> Fantastic grow the evening gowns;
> Agents of the Fisc pursue
> Absconding tax-defaulters through
> The sewers of provincial towns.

Then, just as we have settled for an interesting but rather familiar exercise by the poet, in the last verse he contrasts all this with what is happening to the east, in the approaches to the Eurasian heartland. He conveys the otherness of the latter—an otherness that we have come increasingly aware of in recent months, and one that we can no longer explain simply in terms of communism—with what is surely one of the most

Owen Harries is editor of *The National Interest*.

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haunting images in modern poetry:

> Altogether elsewhere, vast
> Herds of reindeer move across
> Miles and miles of golden moss,
> Silently and very fast.

A CENTURY IN which intellectuals and artists have been so heavily politicized has produced surprisingly little memorable or even passable poetry with political themes. But it is very refreshing when one does come across the occasional lines of verse that speak directly to the great issues of our time, not in the vapid, generalizing language of the social sciences, nor in the knowing terms of the op-ed piece, but in precise, concrete images that can both crystallize what we already half knew and suggest new connections and distinctions.

I suppose the most quoted poem of our time, certainly by those of conservative disposition, has been Yeats' "The Second Coming." We may have been a bit vague as to what a "gyre" was, but that first stanza spoke powerfully to those of us who believed that the crust of civilization and order is thin, and the possibility of chaos real. It is one of the very few modern poems that many people have memorized and that has become hackneyed through overquotation. (It has even become well-known enough for other poets to play off it. See, for example, the great couplet by Ted Pauker—a.k.a. Robert Conquest: "When psychology meets education/A terrible bullshit is born").

Then of course there is Kipling's "Recessional," much quoted in earlier days but seldom referred to now. If the message of "The Second Coming" was only too clear, that of "Recessional" has been thoroughly misunderstood for much of its life. Usually interpreted as an arrogant assertion of imperial and racial superiority, it is in fact a warning against pride and complacency, and a plea for modesty, self-discipline and moral awareness in the transitory world of political power:

> The tumult and the shouting dies;
> The captains and the kings depart:
> Still stand Thine ancient sacrifice,
> An humble and a contrite heart.

and

> Far-called, our navies melt away;
> On dune and heartland sinks the fire:
> Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
> Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
> Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
> Lest we forget - lest we forget!

Kipling also wrote "Dane-Geld," the only poem that could be incorporated without commentary into an International Relations 101 course, at least one of the non-politically correct variety:

> It is always a temptation to a rich and lazy nation,
> To puff and look important and to say:—
> 'Though we know we should defeat you,
> We have not the time to meet you.
> We will therefore pay you cash to go away'.
>
> And that is called paying the Dane-geld;
> But we've proved it again and again,
> That if once you have paid him the Dane-geld
> You never get rid of the Dane.
>
> .....
>
> So when you are requested to pay up or be molested,
> You will find it better policy to say:—
>
> 'We never pay *any*-one Dane-geld,
> No matter how trifling the cost;
> For the end of that game is oppression and shame,
> And the nation that plays it is lost!'

Chesterton in "Lepanto" wrote on a related theme, that of neglect and indifference in the face of threat from the infidel:

> And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,

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And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.
The cold queen of England is looking in the glass;
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass;

I'd never heard of another poem by Chesterton, "The Secret People," until Philip Larkin included it in his rather idiosyncratic *Oxford Book of Twentieth-Century English Verse*. Surprisingly, the poem is about the alleged revolutionary potential of England's silent majority, in a country in which authority has moved away from king and squire to a new class, and in which the interests of ordinary people have been neglected and betrayed. With a grand historical sweep, Chesterton gives his bitter account of a hundred and fifty years of English history:

A war that we understood not came over the world and woke
Americans, Frenchmen, Irish; but we knew not the things they spoke.
They talked about rights and nature and peace and the people's reign;
And the squires, our masters, bade us fight; and never scorned us again....
In foam and flame at Trafalgar, on Albura plains,
We did and died like lions, to keep ourselves in chains...

.....

They have given us into the hands of the new unhappy lords,
Lords without anger and honour, who dare not carry their swords.
They fight by shuffling papers; they have bright dead alien eyes;
They look at our labour and laughter as a tired man looks at flies.
And the load of their loveless pity is worse than the ancient wrongs,
Their doors are shut in the evening; and they know no songs.

Chesterton went on to speculate about a violent English Revolution:

It may be we shall rise in the last as Frenchmen rose the first,
Our wrath come after Russia's wrath and our wrath be the worst.

Well, it didn't quite happen like that of course. Instead of an English Robespierre or Lenin there was mild-mannered Clement Attlee, and instead of violent convulsion there was the Welfare State. The English fate was to be not high, technicolor drama, but a decent, mundane, relentless deterioration.

THE THREE MAJOR poets in residence during this late period of British decline—Auden only paid visits—were John Betjeman, Philip Larkin, and Dylan Thomas.

Betjeman could evoke the sense of decay as well as anyone:

Do you know that the stucco is peeling?
Do you know that the heart will stop?
From those yellow Italianate arches
Do you hear the plaster drop?

But his interest was social-anthropological not political. It was not the weakening of a political order or the decline of a country that he recorded and mourned, but the passing of a way of life, a culture—the middle class, suburban, tennis-playing culture of the inter-war Home Counties. And what he railed against were not politicians but the inroads of technology ("Let all things travel faster/Where motor-car is master/Till only Speed remains) and the vulgarity and ugliness of the new (All concrete sheds around us/And Jaguars in the yard.")

Larkin, less attached to a class, was the true laureate of British decline. His deep personal unhappiness and pessimism ("Deprivation is for me what daffodils were for Wordsworth") were a perfect fit with what was happening in the country, and

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the decline of England, together with the sense of loss it evoked, was one of his principal themes:

I thought it would last my time —
The sense that, beyond the town,
There would always be fields and farms
.....
It seems, just now,
To be happening so very fast;
Despite all the land left free
For the first time I feel somehow
That it isn't going to last,
That before I snuff it, the whole

Boiling will be bricked in
Except for the tourist parts —
First slum of Europe: a role
It won't be so hard to win,
With a cast of crooks and tarts.

And that will be England gone,
The shadows, the meadows, the lanes,
The guild halls, the carved choirs...

When the Wilson government decided to withdraw the British presence from "East of Suez" in the late 1960s, Larkin responded with his bitter "Homage to a Government":

Next year we are to bring the soldiers home
For lack of money, and it is all right.
Places they guarded, or kept orderly,
Must guard themselves, and keep themselves orderly.
We want the money for ourselves at home
Instead of working. And that is all right.
.....
The statues will be standing in the same
Tree-muffled squares, and look nearly the same.
Our children will not know it's a different country.
All we can hope to leave them now is money.

It is a poem that is likely to be quoted often by Americans in coming years.

Dylan Thomas wrote nothing resembling this. Indeed, and to be fair, he was dead before the really conspicuous, galloping decline set in. But as he did not have a political bone in his body, and as he walked through the Great Depression (while living in South Wales, a bastion of radical politics) and the Second World War seemingly oblivious to what was going on, it is unlikely he would have been moved to write about it in any case. Yet Thomas did write a "political" poem of a kind, one divorced from any specific time or place but giving powerful expression to a version of the Great Man view of human affairs:

The hand that signed the paper felled a city;
Five sovereign fingers taxed the breath,
Doubled the globe of dead and halved a country;
The five kings did a king to death.

The mighty hand leads to a sloping shoulder,
The finger joints are cramped with chalk;
A goose's quill has put an end to murder
That put an end to talk.

The hand that signed the treaty bred a fever
And famine grew, and locusts came;
Great is the hand that holds dominion over
Man by a scribbled name.

The five kings count the dead but do not soften
The crusted wound nor stroke the brow;
A hand rules pity as a hand rules heaven;
Hands have no tears to flow.

Oddly enough, Auden, in the middle of his "Marxist" period, wrote a sonnet—"Embassy"—which, in a very different way, expressed a similar view of how the world works:

As evening fell the day's oppression lifted;
Far peaks came into focus; it had rained:
Across wide lawns and cultured flowers drifted
The conversation of the highly trained.

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Two gardeners watched them pass and
priced their shoes:
A chauffeur waited, reading in the drive,
For them to finish their exchange of views;
It seemed a picture of the private life.

Far off, no matter what good they intended,
The armies waited for a verbal error
With all the instruments for causing pain:

And on the issue of their charm depended
A land laid waste, with all its young men
slain,
Its women weeping, and its towns in terror.

SO, BACK TO AUDEN. He was an incessant reviser and censor of his own poems, he couldn't leave them alone. The poem quoted above, for example, doesn't appear in the Random House edition of his collected poems, which is said to contain "all the poems that W.H. Auden wished to preserve." And the couplet from "Brussels in Winter" that I quoted earlier was changed in later editions to the much more specific, and to my mind inferior:

The city still escapes you; it has lost
The qualities that say 'I am a Thing'

He also dropped a whole stanza from "In Memory of W.B. Yeats" (from which the first quotation, on the state of Europe, in this piece comes.) After the assertion that Time "Worships language and forgives/Everyone by whom it lives", the now missing stanza went on to say of Yeats:

Time that with this strange excuse
Pardoned Kipling and his views,
And will pardon Paul Claudel,
Pardons him for writing well.

In this case the motive was almost certainly a change of opinion about one or both of the poets named in the dropped stanza.

But far and away the most spectacular act of self-censorship on Auden's part was undoubtedly the omission of the important poem "Spain 1937" from his collected work. There are some marvelous things in this poem—for instance, the description of Spain as "That fragment nipped off from hot Africa/Soldered so crudely to inventive Europe."

But the heart of the poem is a passage contrasting the ongoing and violent political struggle with the promise of a normal, sane, future, once victory is achieved.

Tomorrow the rediscovery of romantic love;
The photographing of ravens; all the fun
under
Liberty's masterful shadow;
Tomorrow the hour of the pageant-master
and the musician.

Tomorrow for the young the poets exploding like bombs,
The walks by the lake, the winter of perfect
communion;
Tomorrow the bicycle races
Through the suburbs on summer evenings:
but today the struggle.

To-day the inevitable increase in the
chances of death;
The conscious acceptance of guilt in the face
of murder;
To-day the expending of powers
On the flat ephemeral pamphlet at the boring meeting.

The first two lines in the last quatrain of that passage have a history. Originally they read:

Today the deliberate increase in the
chances of death;
The conscious acceptance of guilt in the
necessary murder;

In that form they caught George Orwell's eye and he wrote about them in *Inside the Whale*, published in 1940:

But notice the phrase 'necessary murder'. It

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could only be written by a person to whom murder is at most a word. Personally I would not speak so lightly of murder. It so happens that I have seen the bodies of numbers of murdered men—I don't mean killed in battle, I mean murder....Mr. Auden's brand of amoralism is only possible if you are the kind of person who is always somewhere else when the trigger is pulled. So much of left-wing thought is by people who don't even know that fire is hot...

It has been widely assumed that it was this onslaught that caused Auden to revise those lines, and perhaps later to drop the whole poem from the various selected and collected volumes. But Edward Mendelson, Auden's literary executor and editor, says that this is not so, that Auden first published his revision a month before Orwell published his criticism. A whole month...that hardly settles the matter. In the small and incestuous world of serious English writing, it is not only possible but more than likely that Auden would have known of the impending attack for much longer than a month before it was delivered in print.

Not that one would want to make too much of this clash between Auden and Orwell. Despite the harshness of his criticism of that one passage, and very typically, Orwell described "Spain 1937" as "one of the few decent things that have been written about the Spanish War." And both men stand out as among the most honest, intelligent and decent commentators on their time.

In 1939, the year that Yeats died, another Irish poet was born. Like his great predecessor, Seamus Heaney has written of the troubles of his country in words that now seem to speak of more than Ireland:

> Men die at hand. In blasted street and home
> The gelignite's a common sound effect
>
> .....
>
> On all sides "little platoons" are mustering—
> The phrase is Cruise O'Brien's via that great
> Backlash, Burke—while I sit here with a pestering
> Drouth for words at once both gaff and bait
>
> To lure the tribal shoals to epigram
> And order...
>
> .....
>
> O land of password, handgrip, wink and nod,
> Of open minds as open as a trap.

In this century men have looked to many exotic and improbable places—Russia, China, Cuba, even Nicaragua—for signs of what the future will be like. It will be very strange indeed if it turns out that the first place in which the plot of the post-Cold War world was previewed—even before that world had come into being—was in a small British province on the northwest rim of Europe. □

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